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NOTES OF THE WEEK

THE Protocol is dead. We do not propose to indulge in fandangoes of delight over the corpse. Nor, however, are we stricken to the heart at the news. If there is one element in the vaunted "Geneva atmosphere" which we hate to breathe, it is the resentment felt by some ardent League champions at any progress achieved, or even attempted, otherwise than through the offices of the League. The task of the moment is to find a reassuring formula for the expression of a European longing for rest and peace; a formula whose repetition will break the spell of mutual suspicion and free the nations from the self-imposed burden of armaments—a release which, according to a great statistical economist, "would make, for the great mass of the peoples of the industrial nations, the difference between grinding penury and a reasonable standard of comfort." The German proposals now under discussion are so much clearer and simpler than the contents of the Protocol that the latter document, but not the aspirations behind it, has quietly faded out of the picture.

GENEVA

At Geneva, whither the Quarterly Council meeting has drawn such hosts of observers that probably many people believe a plenary Assembly to be in progress, interest centres round security and the cognate problem of Germany's adherence to the League. The great obstacle in the way of this is the German dislike of Article 16 of the Covenant, which would oblige her to facilitate the passage through German territory of the forces of other States employed in defence of the League Covenants. Thus, if Russia attacked Poland, Germany would have to allow French troops to come to the rescue of Poland through the heart of Germany, while German sympathies would be entirely on the Russian side, and Germany would hope to profit by Polish defeat to restore more tolerable conditions on her Eastern frontier.

A WAY OUT

The only way out of this difficulty is to give Germany an interest in Poland's security and prosperity, an interest which probably nothing but certain territorial rectifications could arouse. Another reflection is suggested by Germany's

Everything's right—
if it's a

Remington
TYPEWRITER

First in 1873—
First to-day!

attitude. Has not the Protocol discussion revealed that the obligations imposed by the existing Covenant are very vague and generally uncomprehended? We wonder whether the conclusion of a Western Pact such as we eagerly desire ought not to be followed or accompanied by an elucidation of the implications of the Covenant, and whether by certain alterations in that document Germany's objections might not conceivably be met. We are inclined to believe that the League would gain, rather than lose, by a modification of the duties assumed by its members, especially if the projected Pact were to become the first line of security, so relegating the Covenant to a secondary position.

MR. KIRKWOOD'S SUSPENSION

The suspension of Mr. Kirkwood has had one good effect. It has resulted in the setting up of a Committee to resume the revision of the Standing Orders governing the proceedings of the House of Commons, a task left incomplete when the matter was under consideration in 1902. At present the duty of deciding the length of time a Member should be suspended after being named by the Speaker is cast upon the Leader of the House. What is wanted is that words should be inserted in the Standing Orders which would relieve the Leader, generally the Prime Minister, of the invidious position in which he now finds himself, and make it perfectly plain what the penalty should be for a given offence and for the repetition of that offence. Into the merits of Mr. Kirkwood's case it is hardly necessary to enter, except perhaps to say that Mr. Kirkwood has been a persistent offender ever since he entered the House, and, while both Mr. Speaker and the Chairmen of Committees have been at times most indulgent, the disturbing influence of his frequent outbursts during Debate could not for ever be tolerated.

WORK FOR BOYS

The finding of employment for boys leaving school is becoming a matter of extreme urgency. Mr. Lansbury has suggested two methods for minimizing the difficulty. First, he would raise the school age to sixteen; his other proposal is to form what may be called juvenile labour colonies in this country, and to require those boys who cannot find work elsewhere to go through a course of training on the land, presumably with the object of being brought up as agriculturists. Whether or not he would use compulsion was not quite clear from his observations, but if he meant to introduce forced labour we would point out to him that his proposal is not likely to be accepted here. The suggestion we would make is that the financial provisions of the Empire Settlement Act be extended, and the necessary sum of money voted to enable arrangements to be made with the Dominion Governments for the setting up of labour colonies overseas where boys could be trained for farm work in the Dominions and, when that training was over, given work on the land for fair wages. Such a scheme would not only help on the development of the great resources of Canada and Australia, but would give to the boys themselves opportunities in life which it is not possible for them to obtain in this country.

THE INDIAN REFORMS

The majority report of the Committee which has been investigating minor defects in the working of the Indian reform scheme finds the charge that the scheme has failed not proven. But the scheme has collapsed in the Central Provinces, and Bengal, after being kept for eleven months without any Ministers at all; now has a Ministry in the competence and permanence of which no one, Indian or European, believes. Despite the half-hearted assurances of the majority report, the investigations of the Committee, as the usually optimistic Bombay correspondent of *The Times* cables, "confirm the general belief that the Government of India Act cannot continue to function till 1929." There is steadily accumulating evidence in support of our contention that the experiment in India cannot be prolonged, and that its revision or reversal must be undertaken before the weakening of the Services deprives this country of the means of restoring something like the old order.

LORD LYTTON'S LOCUM TENENS

The India Office has blundered badly over the appointment of an Acting-Governor of Bengal for the period during which Lord Lytton will replace Lord Reading at Simla. The assertion that Lord Birkenhead was bound to nominate for the King's approval the senior member of the Executive Council, who happens to be an Indian, is ill-founded. No precedent drawn from days when communications between India and this country, and between one part of India and another were slow, can apply now. But the announcement of a *locum tenens* in Bengal should have accompanied the gazettement of Lord Lytton to Simla. The dilatory procedure adopted aroused expectations the disappointment of which has irritated Indian and to some extent even British feeling in Bengal. A handle has been given to those who assert that the most reputable Indian, however loyal, is at a disadvantage against a British competitor; and Sir John Kerr enters on a difficult task with prejudice against him.

SUMMER TIME

We write before the debate on the Second Reading of the Summer Time Bill, which seeks to make Summer Time a permanent measure, operating from April to October, but by the time these words are read the result of the debate will be known. If the Second Reading is passed, the Government have promised to adopt the Bill and grant facilities for the Third Reading; if defeated, it is possible that this year will be the last of Summer Time for Great Britain. There has been a good deal of opposition from Members for agricultural constituencies, but we trust the good sense of the House will have prevailed, to establish permanently this great boon to the workers of the country.

WAR GUILT

According to M. Victor Margueritte, in the *Paris Ere Nouvelle*, M. Herriot has resolved to throw open the archives of the French Foreign Office in order to facilitate unprejudiced investigation into the origin of the war. Although the Paris Press has preserved almost complete silence about this important news, it seems to be true, as M. Margueritte quotes in support of it a statement

made in Parliament in answer to the Socialist Deputy, M. Fontanier. The decision, if taken, is a wise one, and we should welcome similar action by our own and the Italian Foreign Offices. Not that we think it the least bit probable that new light will be cast upon the origin of the war, or any substantial measure of guilt removed from Hohenzollern shoulders. But the fact that Germany and Russia alone among the principal belligerents have so far drawn the veil from their archives lends colour to all kinds of baseless rumours.

BELGIAN GENERAL ELECTIONS

Belgium will hold General Elections in April. Not long ago the prospect of such an event would have roused the utmost hopes and anxieties in the breasts of every diplomat throughout the world. With M. Poincaré at the helm in France, Belgian policy seemed almost the sole variable factor in a desperately immobile situation. Indeed on at least one occasion (in November, 1923, when the curtain rang down on the farcical tragedy of Separatism) Belgian "defection," as the French regarded it, rescued Western Europe from the brink of an immeasurable catastrophe. The replacement of M. Poincaré by M. Herriot altered all that. Yet Belgian opinion, by reason of the close links binding that country to France, remains a factor not to be ignored. Belgium is bound by a military pact to France, but not to Poland. Her longing for a settlement in Western Europe is restricted by no serious anxieties for the fate of countries beyond the Vistula. M. Theunis, the outgoing Premier, is said to be determined to resign from politics. It will be surprising if his successor is as acquiescent in French views as himself. As to Belgian internal politics, these assume more and more the aspect of a struggle between the French-speaking and Flemish-speaking elements, now roughly balanced, but with each year weighting the scales for the Flemish.

AUSTRALIAN POLITICS

Queensland appears to have the distinction of providing Labour leaders for the Federal Government of Australia. Twice in succession has the Prime Minister of that State resigned his position in order that he may turn his attention to Federal politics. The late Mr. Ryan took this step six years ago, and was a tower of strength to his party in their struggle for supremacy in the House of Representatives. Mr. Theodore's resignation is now announced, and it is confidently expected that in the elections due in December he will be found occupying the post of leader of the Labour Party. Possibly before that a seat will be found for him in the Federal Parliament, and if that be so it is not unlikely that, as with Mr. Ryan, he will be at once elected deputy-leader. There is no doubt that his capabilities and powers of organization will be a great asset when the time comes for an appeal to the country to be made. Whether or not he will pursue the same tactics as he did in Queensland remains to be seen. Certainly his experiments in State Socialism were a disastrous failure and caused heavy demands to be made on the Queensland taxpayers. His political opponents are not likely to regret his departure, and it is to be hoped that the National and Country Parties will now pull themselves together and act in unity.

MORE EGYPTIAN DISCOVERIES

Public interest being a subtle and wayward quality, it may be doubtful how far it will be excited by the discovery by Dr. Reisner of what may turn out to be the tomb of King Seneferu, the second in order of the fourth Egyptian Dynasty and the immediate predecessor of Khufu, or Cheops, to give him the name which Herodotus made popular. But, quite apart from the question of the artistic interest of any articles found in the tomb, the discovery must rank as at any rate not a whit inferior in interest or importance to the finding of the tomb of Tutankhamen, who was a monarch of a much later dynasty and in his personal capacity a king of comparatively minor greatness. Seneferu was one of the greatest of the ancient Egyptian kings. He established a complete hold over the copper mines of Sinai and, by his ocean-going fleet and a flotilla of ships for the Nile, made the Egypt of his day the centre of the world's commerce.

RESTORING THE PARTHENON

In comparison with the wonderful work that has been achieved at Pompeii in the restoration of buildings ruined by the famous eruption of Vesuvius, it might be tempting to regard the re-erection of some of the fallen columns of the Parthenon in Athens, which the Greek Government is about to undertake, as a very simple matter. In fact the operation is probably one of very much greater difficulty. For the architectural secrets of Athena's temple depend for the airy grace and lightness of their effect on such a sublimated knowledge of optics as almost to make it appear hopeless that any piecemeal restoration should achieve success. It is most certainly not a matter of simply re-imposing one on another the fallen drums. The measurements and proportions of these great blocks of marble are so infinitesimally graded in their relations that it seems almost certain that the erection of any piece in any other than its mathematically exact place will make discord of the effect. It would be better to leave the temple the harmonious, if pitiful, ruin that it is at present than to blur its magic proportions by any miscalculation on the part of restorers.

THE LOEB LIBRARY

Everyone whose Greek and Latin have worn less well than his love of literature blesses the enterprise of Mr. James Loeb and rejoices that Cambridge should honour him. We cannot be too grateful for sound texts and scholarly translations not only of the major classics but of certain that, till included in the Loeb Library, were hardly available to the ordinary cultured reader. But Mr. Loeb's greatest service to his age is in luring to the classics those who can read only the translations in his library. For our masses, losing their own unwritten and homely traditions as the life of the fields gave way to that of the factories, have been in grave danger of losing all sense of continuity in human affairs. To them, through the translations, Mr. Loeb has thrown open the ancient and written traditions, and has perhaps thus done more, though indirectly, to check the vulgarity, impatience and folly of modern popular thought than any statesman, propagandist, or pedagogue.

INSURANCE OR CHARITY?

IT is difficult to follow Socialist processes of thought in the somewhat querulous speeches which followed on Mr. Hayday's motion in the House of Commons. Nominally, Mr. Hayday and his friends were assailing the circular recently issued by the Ministry of Labour to local unemployment authorities, demanding the satisfaction of certain conditions before unemployment benefit is conceded. Actually, though perhaps not always consciously, the Socialists sought to transform the whole character of Unemployment Insurance. As a Conservative speaker, Colonel Henderson, pointed out, the Socialists were engaged throughout the debate in claiming for the insurance system now its proper character and now that of a Poor Law system, as suited their argument's convenience. But there is no excuse at all for confusion of thought. It is true that of the enormous expenditure incurred by this country during the last five years on unemployment, a total of some £250,000,000, exclusive of about fifty millions on out-relief, a proportion has had the look of charitable gifts. That was inevitable because, when the Act of 1920 came into force, in very exceptional circumstances, about eight million freshly insured workers were the victims of a very severe slump in trade and industry. To keep them out of all benefit until they could contribute would have been harsh, and on a perfectly clear understanding they were, temporarily, allowed benefit in expectation of future contributions. "Uncovenanted" or, as it is now more accurately called, "extended" insurance was quite definitely an advance made in reliance on future contributions by the benefited persons. It was a temporary expedient, justified by very unusual conditions, but in no quarter regarded as implying an abandonment of the fundamental principle of insurance—benefit in return for contributions. There was never the slightest idea that benefit should be given to persons beyond the scope of the Act or for an indefinite period.

The essential principle was once more laid down, and by a Socialist Government, in the Act of last year, whereby a certain number of contributions within a certain limit of time was made the condition of unemployment benefit. It is true that the Act allowed the Minister to refrain from enforcing this condition, but he was authorized to exercise leniency only till September, 1925. Now, if a Conservative Minister of Labour had decided to act on the letter of the law, and without any tightening up in the spring or summer of this year to revert to a strict insurance scheme in September, he might well have exposed himself to a charge of being harsh. It was obviously his duty to effect the return to normal methods gradually, and it is in pursuance of such a reasonable policy that the present Minister has issued the circular which arouses Socialist indignation. Nobody can call it very drastic. All that it requires of ordinary candidates for benefit, disabled ex-Service men being treated differently, is that every applicant shall give proof either of having done eight weeks' work during the last year and a half or of having in all made thirty payments to the fund. That this demand will press

hardly on individuals here and there may be admitted. It will affect a certain number of old men, and a rather larger number of young men; in all, about 11,000 persons. To deal with such cases, and in fact with the general troubles of the worker, there is need of a comprehensive measure, such as the Government contemplates, which would protect the worker not merely against unemployment, accidents, and sickness, but against all misfortunes. Yet, in administering the Unemployment Act, it is indisputably necessary to get back to the principle that without contributions there can be no grant of benefits.

Such a return is necessary in the interests of the steady contributor, whose fund cannot rightly be depleted indefinitely for the benefit of non-contributors, in the interests of working-class self-respect, and in the interests of the whole tax-paying community. Nothing but muddle can issue from a confusion of insurance with charity, of earned benefit with compassionate dole. If there are hard cases, as there are, they must be dealt with otherwise than by violating the fundamental principles of insurance. The lot of the old worker, who loses employment at an age when there can be but little prospect of finding new work, is not easy to relieve. As regards the youngest potential workers, for whom there is in fact no work, and who are becoming expert in idleness, there is a powerful case, often stated in these columns, for raising the school-age. Then there is the problem of the woman worker. During the debate, a feminine Socialist expatiated on the hardship of driving women into domestic service, where they will not have unemployment benefit. We have not the slightest sympathy with her plea. The thing is evidently beyond calculation, but if it could be calculated what amount of the time and energy of brain-workers is wasted, and how far their time work is hindered, by the petty but unavoidable and very wearing troubles consequent on the shortage, and the incompetence, of female domestic workers to-day, the nation would realize that it pays in almost every higher activity for the independence enjoyed by those who ought to be at household labours. And much more might be said of incidental problems of unemployment. But the point is that the return to strict insurance, which Socialist legislation itself fixed for the autumn of this year, must be begun now, and that, pending a comprehensive scheme, the existing system must be administered in accordance with its central principle. Whether the country will be able to afford a still wider scheme is open to serious doubt. It has spent some £300,000,000 in five years for unemployment; its industries and trade groan under a crushing burden of taxation; and, as the recent loss of a very important ship-building contract reminds us, it is losing, through dearth, the means of mitigating unemployment. But whatever the answer to the question, it is certain that insurance and charity must be kept in separate compartments.

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TRADE REVIVAL AND ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION

THE inhabitants of a manufacturing state cannot live simply by taking in one another's washing: that is the dull privilege of the self-sufficing. Great Britain, at any rate, has been built up on the assumption that it supplies far more manufactured goods to other nations than it demands from them in return. Its position is exactly parallel to that of the great stores: unable to sell without first buying, it is equally unable to buy much more than it sells without risk of bankruptcy. These are platitudes, but the recent ominous excess of imports gives them a keener edge, exchanging the pleasant nebulosity of the theory for reality. When Britain first made and consolidated her position as a manufacturing state, competition was negligible. Foreign countries were working mainly with the tools which had been beaten out of the field at home: the brief internal struggle between the new manufacturer and the old was immediately repeated in world affairs with the rest playing the old manufacturer and Britain as the new. Moreover, the competitors were weak: France was subject to revolutionary fits; Germany still lay in fragments; the United States were a novelty; Italy was medieval and Japan had scarcely been heard of. The competing nations were often slow to imitate England, but they had at least the benefit of her experience and the preliminary horrors of the Industrial Revolution were not repeated in them. During the hundred years before 1914 the pace was getting steadily hotter. More and more countries turned to industrialism, diminishing the British monopoly; the population of Great Britain doubled itself and doubled again. But still it was mainly the cheapest and least skilled work which we lost, for which we ought to have been thankful. Its place was taken by the providential appearance of new manufactures—for instance, motor vehicles. Long immunity from serious struggles, both international and internal, together with the exploitation of far countries, made the world richer, and that forcing up of the standard of living by provocative advertising which Americans have labelled "consumptionism" began to make itself felt. The skill of advertisers in making the mouth water is the cause of more strikes and industrial discontent than the worst ill-treatment produced.

So 1914 found us beginning to drop behind in a lunatic race with a growing population and a rising standard of living. The Germans found their progress too slow for them, struck in a wild attempt to get rich quick, became more involved than they had foreseen, and were crushed—nominally. But the war had this effect: that the position advanced as far in ten years as it would normally have done in forty. The ships were taken from Germany, the rolling stock, mines, and much else. But most of these were replaceable; time was on her side and she had stolen a generation. England had strained her finances; her business connexions were broken; the army of unemployed which might have been foreseen had arrived prematurely and in crushing force.

Post-war England has been inclined to take

things easy, "waiting for something to turn up" in the form of a trade revival. It awaits as a prescriptive right the return of the "good old times." The gradual leakage of foreign custom, long considerable but at first balanced and camouflaged by new industries, was enormously accelerated during and after the war. Certainly, a world trade revival is likely now that the position is stabilized, but we forget that we have already as many men in employment as before the war. The thing we ask is not a mere revival but an unprecedented expansion. When world trade revives our share will be smaller than usual, smaller by the difference between the increase in the demand and the amount of new manufacturing done abroad. After rescuing a drowning person, it is quite feasible to lay him on the bank and wait for him to recover consciousness. He may come to in time, or he may die. To make his recovery speedier and more certain one usually applies artificial respiration instead. It seems conceivable that there is some method of applying artificial respiration to our comatose trade if we are willing to be bothered with it. Already, more by good fortune than anything else, London has remained the financial capital of the world. We owe that to our unshaken reputation for honesty and stability: an advantage which no amount of hard work by foreigners can remove, but only our own default. Without that incalculable prestige our present position would be almost hopeless; possessing it, the rest should not be difficult to recover. Because our standards of living, and therefore our workers' wages, are high, and because we have no national genius for manufacturing flimsy rubbish, the prices of British goods must always tend to be high and liable to undercutting. That handicap must at all costs be counter-balanced. Two or three tentative suggestions on ways and means may not be out of place here.

Clearly, if British banks were given to defaulting, our financial reputation, founded on trust, would immediately collapse. We might apply the same principle to industry, for British integrity is even now an extremely valuable asset, and we are not in such a prosperous state that we can afford to overlook anything that may help us. There seems at present to be no more guarantee of good faith in international trade than is assured by Courts of Justice—that is to say, a Jew, or even a German, may set up a "British" firm trading on British prestige, and if he defaults he is only answerable to a cumbersome lawsuit. If some association such as the Federation of British Industries felt itself strong enough to set up a mercantile law centre and court of arbitration sufficiently well supported to guarantee that any merchant or buyer abroad having a legitimate grievance against a British firm could rely upon having it settled for him on the spot, either by private negotiation or, if necessary, legal action, British trade would benefit enormously. The effect of such an institution (which might be organized on similar lines to institutions like the Automobile Association, with much the same functions of giving free legal assistance and checking abuses) would be that when a British and a foreign manufacturer submitted tenders for a contract abroad, the inviter of the tenders would know that whereas the default of the foreigner would entail

complicated legal proceedings, the British firm would be kept up to the mark by a strong body protecting his interests. It might offer disinterested confidential advice and undertake (for a fee) such duties as the checking of orders before they were shipped. If the institution did its work well it would be such a rock to cling to in this unsettled world that where the British tender was slightly higher than competitors it would help to turn the scale, as a kind of insurance against disappointment. It would be a promise that if any British trader defaulted, the central authority of British trade would feel as much aggrieved and take as strong action as the injured party could have done at home.

THE CAUSES OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS IN FRANCE

[FROM OUR FRENCH CORRESPONDENT]

IT is impossible not to notice that, probably from fear of appearing to interfere in the interior politics of France, the British Press hardly ever alludes to the political causes of the financial crisis. Most newspapers speak of what they call the *bourgeois* panic without connecting it with its origin. Yet the political aspect of the monetary difficulty at the root of the economic stagnation is obvious. A few days ago I was in the North of France, in the highly-industrial district between Maubeuge and Valenciennes. Following the example of many of his neighbours, a manufacturer whom I personally know made up his mind to stop piling up merchandise for which there are no buyers, and decided to suspend work in one of his two factories. The police were duly notified, and, in a few hours, the *commissaire* sent in the usual questionnaire concerning the causes of the interruption and its probable duration. My friend hesitated a few moments before answering the most vital question, then he said: "Why not be frank? If I merely state that I cannot go on for lack of orders the information will be *nil*. Let's give the real cause of the trouble." Whereupon he wrote on the dotted line: *Politique de M. Herriot*.

The fact is that nothing is intelligible in the French situation if one does not realize that the Radical-Socialist combine has created it, and it will remain unchanged as long as the arrangement of political colours is the same in the Chamber. This was not so obvious at first as it is to-day. Remember that the finance of the *Bloc National* was, and still is, seen to by Senator Billiet, who may not be as advanced as the banker of the Radical Party, M. Finaly, but all the same is friendly with many Radicals and actually supported M. Herriot in the elections of 1919. As long as the Radicals could be distinguished from the Socialists they caused no particular anxiety. Even after their combine with the latter in the elections of 1924 the country was not alarmed, and the refusal of the Socialists to enter the Cabinet seemed to show that optimists were right. The crisis came, in a spectacular manner, at the time of Jaurès's funeral. I was away from Paris when the ceremony took place, but the letters I received showed that the commotion was the greatest experienced since

August, 1914, and even now the average Parisian cannot allude without disgust to the grandiose but awe-inspiring procession in which the apparent leaders were, it is true, M. Herriot and his *bourgeois* Cabinet, but the people who really counted were a mob of Communists marching under flaming flags and driving the Government onward. The sight assumed at once the value of a symbol and has retained it ever since.

Careful readers of the European Press, and there are now many more in France than there used to be, could not help noticing that, in spite of the satisfaction with which M. Poincaré's fall was greeted by most nations outside the *Petite Entente*, his successor met with no better fortune the moment real issues were at stake. M. Herriot had imagined he could settle the Debts question by adopting what was called a more European attitude, but the hope turned out to be mere imagination. The question of Debts is exactly where it used to be under M. Poincaré, and the *Daily News* and the *Westminster Gazette* talk of France in exactly the same tone they used a year ago.

The emigration of capital began the moment it was realized that the international chances of France were as uncertain as, and her national prospects more gloomy than, they had been before. Money became shy and unemployment was not long in appearing. Textile establishments in Normandy stopped work three days a week. In the Paris stores themselves there are no crowds. Beggars who had completely disappeared are now met with again, especially where their presence is most pathetic, in bakeries. Repinings begin to be frequently heard against the presence of foreign workers. Altogether an atmosphere of discontent, which need not be described to English readers, is created, but with none of the relief which the British background of financial stability can afford.

Is the Radical-Socialist combine alone to be blamed? Certainly not. Many of the criticisms hurled at the *Bloc National* for its lack of fiscal courage are well-founded. But it is a fact that if the *Bloc National* deserves some credit for having consented to serve, through its entire four years, under Radical Premiers, the present Radical administration is entitled to little admiration for taking its watchwords from Socialists influenced, even if they deny it, by Communists in France and abroad. Less than three weeks ago M. Clementel calmly said in the Chamber that he had contemplated and only reluctantly given up the idea of a postal censor who would search the foreign mails for French investments abroad. Dozens of new departures in this year's budget are in contradiction to the *Code Civil*, and the right of property is actually denied, instead of being merely limited, by the new theory that an heir can only become one legally if he is declared to be so by a judge. To hint at such a thing in France is to invite evasion.

It is remarkable that a man so remote from political conservatism as M. Bérenger advocates complete ignorance of those Socialist measures in the Senate. As for M. Caillaux, who now speaks in public every day, he quotes Napoleon, Baron Louis, and Louis XVIII with the greatest reverence, and positively bragged at Valenciennes about being the son of a Catholic banker and

politician. But how can the end come? M. Herriot has an enormous majority and, like the Bastille genius in the well-known song, he cannot jump from the pinnacle where he stands prominent and miserable. Meanwhile, bank notes are growing as scarce as gold was in 1914, and payments are rendered almost impossible.

JOHN KEATS

By A. E. COPPARD

A LITTLE over a century ago, in the time of George the Third, there lived a very small young man, just over five feet high, with vivid red hair, who seemed to think that the world had been fashioned simply in order that poetry might be written about it. Not exactly the world about him, at least not mankind: Trafalgar and Waterloo were fought in his time, but he may not have noticed those occasions; Napoleon flared across the period of his life like a shocking comet, and he himself received a black eye from a belligerent butcher, but the little red-haired poet was, generally speaking, unmoved by contemporary human cares. His soul was filled with ineffable longings for a golden age that would yield him armoured knights, Spenserian knights, in Epping Forest; the Italian Renaissance in Wandsworth, and Grecian gods in Margate and the Isle of Wight. Because of his great longing he has put beautiful shadows of those things where he dwelt, and because of his great genius they will be there for ever.

Among his friends were Leigh Hunt—who called him "Junkets"—and a man whose fame is far greater than his own, the man who invented Stephens's Ink; among his acquaintances were Wordsworth, Lamb, and Shelley. All of these people he rather despised. Like the true aesthete he was, in spite of the fact that he had been equipped to become a surgeon, he did no work in life beyond the composing of "divine poesy," though an attempt was made to induce him to take up the calling of a hatter. How ironical it was that the first prize he won at school should have been 'A Dictionary of Merchandise.'

During his lifetime not one of Keats's three volumes of poetry sold as many as five hundred copies. It was an age that bought poetry by the waggon-load; the successes of Byron and Moore are landmarks in English publishing, and even Clare had an enormous sale; but Keats's work was more scathingly reviewed than that of any writer before or since. Despite this his friends without exception seem to have had a boundless faith in his genius, and the man's own faith was sublime, a faith that posterity has almost too amply justified if we may judge by the vast biographies devoted to his five years' work. His friends did not hesitate to compare him with Shakespeare, and there is a warrant for this somewhat arrogant claim. Apart from context, Keats's poetic diction has all the august air of the Elizabethan, and the best of his verbal harmonies ring with a music that irresistibly recalls the elder man's. Beyond that, however, there is no resemblance, either in knowledge of life or any philosophical intuition of it. Of Lord Byron Keats said: "He describes what he sees—I describe what I imagine." If we except Keats's

lovely rendering of sweet nature, he was right, and it is fortunate that he had an imagination remarkably sensitive to ethereal beauty. This was mainly nourished upon readings of other poets, not by any assimilation of life. A remarkable imitative faculty enabled him to write like Shakespeare, like Milton, like Blake, like Wordsworth, and he stole from everybody. To offset this there have since been scores of poets, from Tennyson and Rossetti, who imitated him. He realized the dangers of such a gift, and despised it; like Hokusai, he was "the young man mad about poesy," and his determination was to shuffle off such mortal coils and write a poem that should be a poem of John Keats, pure and undefiled. In his later narrative poems not less than in his odes he succeeded, for he was markedly in the tradition of Chaucer and Spenser, and markedly remote from the tradition of Shakespeare. His ambition was to write poetic plays, but, taking the test of Shakespeare—and you neither do injustice to Keats by taking such a test, nor praise Shakespeare by wounding Keats—he fails as everyone else fails in what we may call the protean quality, the art of taking upon yourself the height and depth and breadth of the soul you have conceived. You have not merely to render that soul, you have to take its woes upon you, its triumphs, its beliefs, its evil, and its doom, take them like an actor and reveal them. Shakespeare, besides being a poet, had a miraculous imaginative sympathy; apart from these qualities it may be argued that he was quite an ordinary, unheroic, rather astute fellow. But when he conceived Hamlet or Macbeth or Prospero he for a time became those men. And he was just as much Juliet, Portia, Cordelia. Not so with Keats in any degree whatsoever. That quality does not appear again in English poetry until we come to Browning. The men in Keats are all Keats himself, beautiful inhuman beings, always falling asleep or swooning, and the women have no existence, they are vocables with a faery nimbus breathed upon them.

Keats knew too that he lacked a cushion, as it were, of native philosophy. He tried to make one, but he could not, and although he sometimes lamented it he was perhaps content to probe no deeper than his exquisite sense of beauty.

Be still the unimaginable lodge
For solitary thinkings; such as dodge
Conception to the very bourne of heaven,
Then leave the naked brain: be still the leaven
That spreading in this dull and clodded earth,
Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth:
Be still a symbol of immensity;
A firmament reflected in a sea;
An element filling the space between;
An unknown—but no more.

That was enough for him, he needed no more. Isn't it incredible, though, that a boy of twenty should have written that! But all great poetry is incredible, just as all bad poetry is. How different were his letters. Had we nothing else to go upon we could swear he would have been a fine novelist. They are so modern, they have the tang and odour of our own time, whereas in the letters of Shelley and others of that period people seem to converse on stilts and the connotations are something we must look for in museums.

Miss Lowell's new *Life of Keats** is as interesting as it is monumental. Perhaps there is not enough

* 'John Keats.' A Biography by Amy Lowell. Cape. 2 vols. 42s. net.

new material to justify its 1,260 pages, but there is a good deal, and she certainly succeeds in rehabilitating the maligned character of Fanny Brawne. Throughout Miss Lowell rather "mothers" Keats, and she is extremely caustic about those wonderful and generous friends who did not do even more for him than they could possibly do, but the enthusiasm and critical ability with which she compiles his biography, tracing the many influences upon his work, are remarkable and deserve the highest praise.

HEARTBREAK HOUSES

BY GERALD BARRY

PERHAPS it was hardly fair. Perhaps to go straight from the real thing to the sham, from a thirteenth-century Sussex manor-house to "The Hamlet of Heart's Desire," was not quite playing the game. But I was innocent of malicious design; I had simply received two invitations, one from a friend to visit his country home, and the other from the management at Olympia to visit their *rus in urbe*, and had accepted both. One of these places is called an Ideal Home and isn't, and the other (if one may so express it) isn't and is. The manor-house, I reiterate, is genuine thirteenth-century, every beam and lintel and kingpost of it, the kind of place which we all dream of possessing in some vague, enchanted future, when the time comes for us to plant our nine bean rows, retired to our bee-loud glade. This is an improbably perfect specimen, complete with priest's hiding-hole, ghost, nightingale (out of order), and immemorial elms.

Not so the Hamlet of Heart's Desire. This Hamlet is troubled by no ghosts, being no more than a fortnight old, though garbed in the faked raiment of antiquity. Why do twentieth-century architects ape fifteenth-century styles? Why does suburbia delight in the acquisition of domiciles that pretend to a venerability not honestly theirs? The astute promoters of this Exhibition of Ideal Homes comprehend that weakness lurking in the heart of every town-pent citizen, which sets it, poor sentimental thing, fluttering for the broad acres. They understand the instinct of the herd to go to pasture. They know that in the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love in a cottage, with roses round the door, a wife, and a garden roller. Wherefore, when the year's at the spring this new-old-world exhibition is a never-failing success. Thither the tribes go up, prepared for shy encounters with benevolent furnishers who by a philanthropic reversal of the more normal custom have to be pressed to accept payment for their services, who undertake to bear all the costs of moving and ask nothing in return, unless—if they may be forgiven so sordid an allusion—the customer would perhaps care to offer a small monthly cheque? Here is the whole domestic gamut from A to Z, from tin-tacks to tin tabernacles (for there are steel houses here as well, which look as though they needed a tin-opener in place of a latch-key. We know now what they meant by "homes for heroes." He needs to be a hero who would live in one). Here is the Happy Home complete, for so much down and the remainder as it suits you. Here, in fine, is the

Vision Splendid made fact, or seeming fact; a common dream in concrete shape. And the hands of a thousand Juliets tighten on the arms of their Romeos because of it. Alas, that even concrete may be hollow!

These *bijou* pleasaunces aim at making the best of both worlds: the old world and the new. They may be old, but they have young ideas; their interiors, in fact, bristle with every known device for saving labour, they are the last word in modern conveniences. It is a peculiar snobbishness this, which aims at being both up-to-date and out-of-date at the same time. I grow suspicious of these labour-saving graces. My thirteenth-century manor-house (it is already mine when I boast about it to my friends) is fitted with no such devices; it aims not at efficiency but at comfort, achieving efficiency and economy *en route*, as any comfortable house must. One cannot get comfort by inserting a plug in the wainscot and switching on the current; and I sometimes wonder whether one can really get even efficiency that way. I freely admit that what is glibly called the simple life is infinitely complicated, but what of the labour-saving life? I know, at least, that I would rather bang my head on a beam than bang my saxpences on an electric fish-steamer. Life in the Hamlet of Heart's Desire calls for the expenditure of so much labour and hard cash on labour-saving devices that there can be little time or money left over for the simple pleasures of living.

One of the most diverting of Mr. Harry Tate's ingenuities is concerned with a patent mouse-trap. His idea is something like this: the mouse enters the cage, is conveyed by automatic lift to an upper storey, lured down a corridor, pulled up short by a notice forbidding admittance, turns on its heel to explore other routes, and in so doing treads on a bell-switch which awakens the householder and enables him to rush out in time to knock the vermin on the head with a hammer. Of such are too many of your labour-saving devices. At Olympia I found an extremely agreeable young man who extolled to me the undoubted merits of a certain vacuum cleaner. Than this particular vacuum cleaner, he ventured to assert, no finer was on the market. He explained its every merit. "Invaluable in the home, Sir," said this unexceptionably agreeable gentleman, sprinkling pepper prodigally from an enormous pot and making the machine inhale it: "for instance, just run it over the piano and it removes every particle of dust." Just so, my grotesquely agreeable Sir (as I might have answered), but first I must needs run out and buy a piano. I seem to perceive in this conversation a moral on labour-saving contrivances in general. And (I confess it with shame) had I to choose between Mr. Tate's mouse-trap and a more primitive alternative, Die-hard that I am, I would perish in the last passage with my hammer.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

EXHIBITION

ARLINGTON GALLERIES (22 Old Bond Street, W.1). Paintings by Michael Sevier. On Wednesday, March 18, and subsequently.

THEATRES

WYNDHAM'S THEATRE. 'The Man With a Heart.' On Saturday, March 14, and subsequently.

"THE OLD VIC." 'Macbeth.' On Monday, March 16.

EVERYMAN THEATRE. 'The Painted Swan.' On Monday, March 16.

MUSIC

MAINLY ABOUT SCHUBERT

BY DYNELEY HUSSEY

THE Albert Hall cannot, by any minifying process of the imagination, be brought into the category of chambers. Yet last Sunday afternoon a very successful concert of chamber-music was given there. The attempt was justified by the opportunity it gave of hearing Beethoven's Septet, which is early Beethoven at his best, and there was an amusing side to the occasion in the vision of the not undistinguished in brains and dress flocking into this arena, which has been to them the very symbol of Sabbatarian dullness. The only mistake was in the choice of Schubert's 'Forellen' Quintet to end the programme; for the pianoforte at once aroused the demon echoes in the dome which had gilded the lilies of both string-and wind-tone. Afterwards we got on to the subject of Beethoven's posthumous Quartets. My colleague could not go beyond admiration into the stage of liking them. They have not that purely musical quality, he urged, which, for instance, Schubert. . . . I felt the force of his argument on Monday night, when Mr. Steuart Wilson sang in the Wigmore Hall a number of Schubert's songs, whose words he and Mr. Fox Strangways have translated.* For Schubert possessed more than any other composer of his time the gift of expressing musical ideas, that is, ideas which have no counterpart in and cannot be translated into the terms of any other art. Its presence in Schubert's music explains why we can listen to it for longer stretches at a time than we can endure that of most other composers. I speak here of Schubert at his best; for there is a worse, and even Mr. Max Pauer failed recently to make the *longueurs* of two Impromptus sound heavenly. Beethoven's late Quartets demand a severe intellectual concentration, and it is well for the listener to know what the composer is driving at, for instance, that the slow movement of the A minor is an expression of thankfulness for convalescence after a severe illness. Schubert troubles us with no intellectual problems or emotions external to his musical ideas. It matters nothing to us, except as an affair of factual interest, that one movement is founded upon a pathetic song about a dying girl and another upon a pathetic song about a trout.

It is this quality, too, that enabled Schubert to take, besides the jewels of Heine and Goethe and Schiller, the tawdry glass beads of maudering sentimentalists, like Wilhelm Müller, and make them shine as brightly as the real gems—provided one allows the literary intelligence to sleep. It is easier to overlook platitudes in a foreign language than when they are set out naked in the vulgar tongue. So, in reading the translations made by Mr. Fox Strangways and Mr. Wilson, there will be a certain measure of disillusionment for those who have not a knowledge of the language so thorough as that of a native German. For

Schubert has cast over posies, that are no better than the sentimental monstrosities of the Victorian drawing-room ballad, a glamour which has blinded one to the real sense (or nonsense) of the words. For proof, read through the 'Maid o' the Mill' or the 'Wintry Road' cycles in these translations. Hitherto it has been possible to make allowance for the versions appearing in our concert-programmes, which are too often models of illiteracy and clashing cymbals of the contempt of singers and concert-agents for the intelligence of English audiences. If you doubt me, turn up the programme of Mme. Gerhardt's last concert, where you will find in translations of poems set by Hugo Wolf among other masterpieces of the traducer's art: "I have been young, so can also talk"; "That is of importance to girl and wife"; "My love is quite peculiar."

What I have said is no criticism of the translations by Mr. Fox Strangways and Mr. Wilson, which are generally faithful to the spirit if not always to the letter of the original. How difficult their task has been, and what a labour, though of love, probably only themselves know. It is natural that they have not been uniformly successful, and they admit failures in some important songs which could not be left out of any anthology of Schubert. It is, therefore, only in a spirit of profound respect and with a view to pointing out some of the difficulties which they have faced that I venture to note a fault here and there. The chief of these difficulties, indeed the crucial one, is to retain the same idea at any point where in the original the music expresses it emphatically. It is often a question of fitting a word to a couple of notes. Reading through the translation of 'Ständchen'

('Leise flehen meine lieder'), one would say off-hand that it was almost perfect. I say "almost" because "From the moon on high" is not really a good translation of the straightforward statement, "In des Mondes Licht"; "on high" is a *cliché* introduced mainly for the sake of the rhyme. But, then, Rellstab's poem is not "great shakes." It is more serious when we get "Fear no curious eye" in place of "Fürchte, Holde, nicht." For here the word "curious" is to be sung on the notes occupied by "Holde," and how can the singer, without making nonsense of the words, sing those two notes with the tenderness which is apt to "Holde" and obviously intended by the composer? Another trap is that of the tendency for emphasis to fall on unimportant words. Against this the translators have usually guarded with great ingenuity, yet without alterations in the vocal line. But I noticed that in singing 'Freiwilliges Versenken' Mr. Steuart Wilson emphasized the unimportant first word and skipped the more vital second word on a quaver in the sentence beginning "Thus new power." And the first line of 'Atlas' goes "I *am* the luckless Atlas," "am" being put to a double-dotted crotchet on the first beat of a bar. But the very scarcity of such faults is in itself a tribute to these translations, which ought to be in the hands of every singer who cannot cope with German or who wishes to address himself to popular audiences. That they cannot replace the originals, the translators would surely be the first to agree. But, to put their achievement no higher, they have removed all excuse for the singing of balderdash and the printing of it in our programmes.

* More than a hundred of these translations, together with the music of the voice-part, have been published in a volume issued by the Oxford University Press at 10s. 6d., bound in cloth, or in four parts at 2s. and 2s. 6d. a part.

THE THEATRE

BATH AND BEDLAM

By IVOR BROWN

Tunnel Trench. By Hubert Griffith. Produced by the Repertory Players at the Prince's Theatre, March 8.

The Rivals. By R. B. Sheridan. The Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

MR. GRIFFITH has conceded nothing to the average sensual playgoer in his battle-piece. His airmen are not to be viewed (first act and last) in the boudoirs of their sirens, nor do they display romantic ecstasy of mood. They are just fortune's playthings, getting on with their drab and deadly job. Pilots of machines they may be, but they themselves are piloted by the remorseless machine that is modern war. When the curtain falls for the last time we do not know whether the central figure, St. Aubyn, is going to live or die. The play fades away into the fog of war with a realism that none can challenge. All we know is that *Tunnel Trench* has eaten up a myriad lives and still is no man's land; that General Officers Commanding (no doubt on both sides) are issuing congratulations to all ranks; that both armies, or what is left of them, can echo their Housman:

Ten thousand times I've done my best,
And all's to do again.

This is war, and the spectacle of *Bedlam* in action stings and maddens. Mr. Griffith and the Repertory Players gave their audience something larger than a pleasant Sunday evening.

'*Tunnel Trench*,' accordingly, makes a stiff challenge to an audience. It is not often in the history of drama that the public has stood up to a mirror that reveals its own immediate distress. A *Lear* or a *Hamlet* may be made pitiful with all the power of poetry, but his actuality is a thing of the imagination, not of close and compelling fact. The traditional tragic heroes are enfolded in a kindly mist. The severed heads of the more fearfully blood-boltered Elizabethan stage came from foreign or from ancient trunks. But the modern dramatist of war is torturing and slaughtering on his stage the loved ones of his audience. There is no comforting remoteness about the population of *Tunnel Trench*, living, half-living, or dead. When Euripides wanted to have his say about the war that was savaging all the decency that Athens stood for, he had to put his scene in mythical Troy. One Athenian poet did write about a contemporary defeat, and his reward was a fine and a warning. We seem to be stiffer than the Greeks.

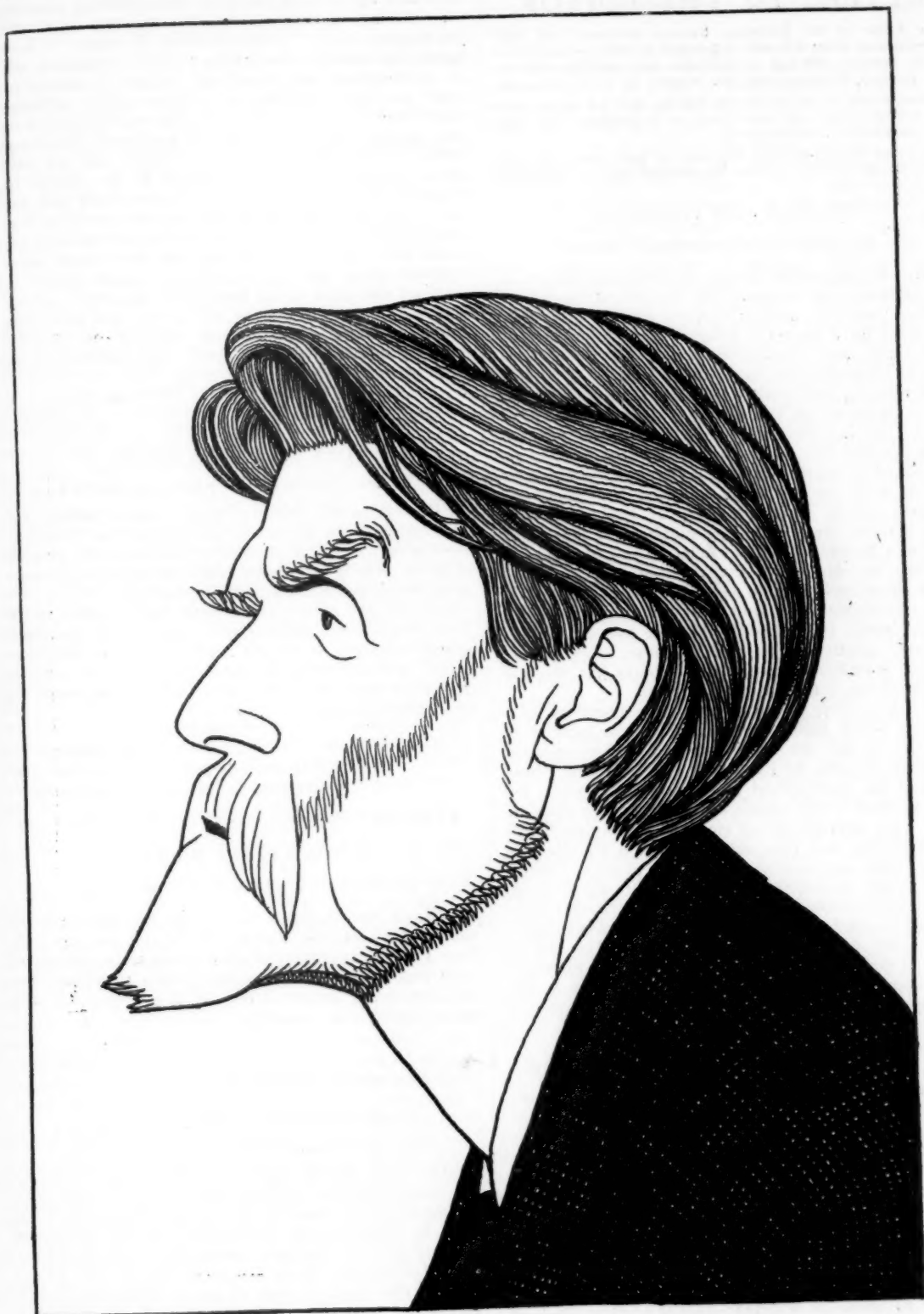
A modern war-play is little likely to soften its tragedy by moral implications. We can pretend that a *Lear*, an *Othello*, or a *Hamlet* brought his trouble on himself; the punishment may be too gross to fit the crime, but the offence is arguably there. But in Mr. Griffith's play there is not a single character, English or German, who is not a good sort. We see them at their ethical best and at their destiny's worst. The dramatist might easily have made some cheap fun at the expense of higher ranks in red-tabbed security, but he carefully abstained. His to record and not to judge. All are good sorts, and nothing is mocked but justice.

Furthermore, he drives home the rewardless, joyless discipline of modern conflict. Romantic war (and to some extent historic war) had its sharp spurt of fury and its dalliance of triumph. The lusty swordsman could dream of his Valhalla and in some sort achieve an earthly parallel. For the heedless there are exultations as well as agonies. But the unhappy warrior of to-day is at once better armed and worse equipped. Machinery may give him wings, but imagination fells him to the earth. He thinks upon the event.

This, as I see it, is what Mr. Griffith had to tell us. "Why tell it, then?" a critic might say. "We know all this, and a leading article is not a play. In any case this wringing of hearts, this panorama of boy-butchery is unnecessary in the play-house." To which I would reply that the theatre has room and to spare for sincerity on any theme, that the state of Europe is not such that we can omit to probe for the human realities beneath the magic word "security," and that '*Tunnel Trench*,' though limited in scope, is a first-rate piece of actuality within those limitations. It is smaller in range and philosophic quality than Mr. Monkhouse's play, '*The Conquering Hero*,' but you cannot blame a work of art for not being larger than it intends to be. Within its own boundaries this episodic story achieves its purpose. The friendships of the doomed men make the beauty lighting a darkness of whose tragic horror there is no question. The producer, Mr. Raymond Massey, deserved the highest praise for his contrivance of movement and his control of tone. Of the players, Mr. Harry Kendall had most to do, and did it well. Honourably mentioned must be Mr. Kenneth Kent, Mr. Gordon Harker, and Mr. Felix Aylmer.

It is a long cry from *Bedlam's Tunnel Trench* to the *Parade at Bath*, from the age of wrath to the age of reason. Thus to journey backwards for our comfort is no compliment to that monster Progress, but it makes a holiday beyond a doubt. Mr. Nigel Playfair, with the assistance of Mr. Norman Wilkinson, has made '*The Rivals*' as spruce and painted a trifle as even colour-greedy Hammersmith has a right to expect. So terrified with the thought of drabness was Mr. Playfair that he conceived the notion of endowing Mrs. Malaprop with a lively youth and a surpassing elegance of attire. The gallants of the play might take her for a weather-beaten she-dragon, but Mr. Playfair preferred the lady in a peacock's plumes. Miss Dorothy Green, who played the part in all its new-found glory, was sharp and rational, so that the Malapropisms seemed quite out of place upon her tongue.

However, if the cause of "Brighter Sheridan" has made Mr. Playfair overreach himself in one direction, it has achieved a startling success in another. The effort to furbish up the dingy part of Falkland has resulted in a brilliant burlesque of the love-lorn fool by Mr. Claude Rains. This actor, who seems to control a greater impetus than any of our time, fairly takes the part by storm and sweeps its brain-sickly humours into a triumph of the ridiculous. Mr. Playfair himself is a sweetly ingenuous Acres, Miss Isabel Jeans languishes exquisitely, and Miss Beatrix Thomson, for whom I recently demanded in these columns a decent opportunity, has a fair chance and takes it to the full.



Dramatis Personæ. No. 162.

By 'Quix'

THE POET LAUREATE
DR. ROBERT BRIDGES, M.A., M.B., F.R.C.P.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us not later than the first post on Wednesday

"THE IDLE AND PARASITIC"

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In the recent House of Commons debate on the suppression of names of the victims of blackmail, a Labour member, unable to leave the class question alone even for a moment, declared that the publication of blackmail cases enabled the public "to see how the idle and parasitic rich spent their time."

The remark, as it stands, is merely an objectionable futility, redolent of the worn-out doctrine of class-hatred. Cut out the word "rich," however, and it is a true, though not exhaustive, statement. Whom exactly the more loquacious than coherent speaker meant when he used the epithet is a matter for conjecture. The only people in this country at the moment to whom it could apply are large numbers of those who rely for a livelihood on the dole. They are idle, in that they will not work, they are parasites, for they are the bloodsuckers who absorb the money of their fellow-countrymen and lend their aid to increase our national debt. It is possible that the honourable and incoherent gentleman referred to these, since one of the most prominent members of his party has recently condemned the dole, but it is doubtful.

More than likely it was one of these pointless vituperations which habitually issue from the mouths of those who would see this country in a like condition to France in 1789, to Russia in 1916 and now, those in whom the class-hatred is the sole obsession. Indeed, so deep is the obsession that they are blind to facts. They appropriate all vice and immorality to the rich, forgetful that they are as common to all mankind as truth and honesty, lying and avarice. When the Israelites modelled the golden calf while Moses was on the mountain, it was not any particular class who worshipped the idol. All of them worshipped, and so they do to-day, rich and poor. The god of money is the object of secret worship in the hearts of ninety-nine per cent. of the human race. It is this worship that begets sin and vice, not the possession or the lack of money.

I am, etc.,

MALCOLM ELWIN

Mortimer House, Castle Road, Nottingham

UNADMINISTERED TERRITORY

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—No one can fail to have been horrified at learning that human sacrifices and slavery are customary and accepted institutions in the unadministered district between Burma and Assam. No one can read the revolting details (poor people clubbing together to share in a human sacrifice, etc., etc.), or reflect on the habitual state of mind of the slaves over whom this inhuman fate continually hangs, without shuddering. No one can fail to feel the liveliest hope that Sir Harcourt Butler's courageous attempt to stamp out these practices may be crowned with success. But the average man's very indignation in this case is sad proof of how little it is realized what an extraordinary boon to the world the British Empire is.

"Unadministered territory"! What a simple harmless phrase it is! Its technical meaning is merely

(in effect) that the district is outside the Empire proper. Time and again its actual (and consequential) meaning is: writhing agony; unalleviated misery; intolerable yet hopeless fear. "Unadministered territory"! How lightly our would-be radical and I.L.P. statesmen talk of undermining the fabric of British "administration" in India and Burma! What native politician would ever have undertaken Sir Harcourt Butler's long and perilous journey for such a purpose? We found India a welter of blood and savagery and we have given it peace, but the worshipper of the phallus remains a savage at heart, and if ever—which God forbid—India (and Burma) should become territory "unadministered" by us, no one who knows the East can doubt but that sati, ritual murder and other worse customs which we have suppressed, would revive.

Is not the plain moral that those who have had experience of the working of this great and benevolent Empire should make it their mission to educate, educate, educate here at home, and counteract the work of its traducers?

I am, etc.,

R. S.

Penge

THE L.C.C. ELECTIONS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—It is not usual to enter upon a public controversy with an official of an Association for membership of which one is eligible, and I do not propose to do so, even if you would admit more correspondence upon Municipal Reform Administration.

But will you permit me to refer your readers to the District Auditor's latest report, and to the published annual accounts of the L.C.C.; and to add that competent criticism from independent ratepayers who do not desire office and who have no "axe to grind," is *ipso facto* valuable.

I am, etc.,

E. S. HOOPER

(Vice-President North St. Pancras Conservative and Unionist Association)

[This correspondence is closed.—Ed. S.R.]

INFORMATION WANTED

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I am engaged in writing the biography of the late Mrs. Hertha Ayrton, *née* Marks, the physicist. May I beg the courtesy of your columns to ask any of your readers who may possess letters or information concerning any period of her life to communicate with me as speedily as possible?

I am, etc.,

EVELYN SHARP

16 John Street, Bedford Row, W.C.1

EX-SERVICE UNEMPLOYED

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The British Legion, of which I am President, has always held the view that the finding of employment for the men who stood by the Empire during the Great War is of paramount importance, for the absorption of these men into industry means the automatic alleviation of distress. Much has been done by the Legion in this direction, in face of great difficulties due to protracted trade depression, but much more remains to be accomplished, and I most earnestly appeal to all employers in the London area to notify any vacancies as they occur to the Secretary, Employment Bureau, British Legion, Ashley Mansions, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1. (Telephone: Victoria 5964), or, outside London, to the Secretary of the local British Legion Branch.

I am, etc.,

HAIG, F.M.

26 Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1

NEW FICTION

BY GERALD GOULD

The Death of a Millionaire. By G. D. H. and Margaret Cole. Collins. 7s. 6d. net.

The Cartwright Gardens Murder. By J. S. Fletcher. Collins. 7s. 6d. net.

The Woollen Monkey. By George Goodchild. Long. 7s. 6d. net.

The Secret of the Flames. By Ralph Rodd. Collins. 3s. 6d. net.

The Deductions of Colonel Gore. By Lynn Brock. Collins. 3s. 6d. net.

Mr. Pepper, Investigator. By Sir Basil Thomson. Castle. 7s. 6d. net.

I ALWAYS feel out of it among my intellectual friends, not merely on general grounds, but specifically because of their immense enthusiasm and paralysing erudition in a field where I have never learnt to be at home—the detective-story. They have, I suppose, other interests; I have heard them mention Test matches and Cup-ties and even horses; but, broadly speaking, they care for nothing except clues, and immerse themselves only in solutions. They have their own symbolisms and pass-words, their own fetishes and places of pilgrimage. No doubt they take off their shoes when they pass up Baker Street.

To me, sitting in outer darkness, the detective-story seems almost of its very nature to fall between two stools. The interest of the problem is real enough of its kind, but it is not a literary interest, and need not be embodied in a book. It is the interest of the acrostic, not of life: of the chess-problem, not of the Muses. And, precisely in proportion as one is deflected from abstract speculation by the living warmth of character and emotion, the specific virtue of the detective-story is lost: one ceases to bother about finger-marks. Therefore characterization, style, humour, do not—so the connoisseurs assure me—matter: what matters is plot, plot, plot.

Much depends on a good beginning. Before one begins to care about the clearing-up of a mystery, one must be attracted by the mystery itself. I think that here is a slight weakness in both Mr. and Mrs. Cole's book, and in Mr. Fletcher's. Each presents us with an apparently inexplicable death: more strictly speaking (but I don't want, in fairness to the authors, to give too much away), one of them presents us with an apparently inexplicable apparent death. In neither case do we know enough about the "dead" person to care whether he is dead or alive: he seems to have lost a life which, as far as we are concerned, he never had. Besides, to present a corpse (or an alleged corpse) in the first chapter, and start a hue-and-cry after the murderer (or the alleged murderer), is too usual a proceeding. Even my palate, singularly unjaded as regards this kind of fiction, demands something spicier. And Mr. Rodd knows how to provide it. He not merely kills his man, but cooks him as Ho-ti in Lamb's essay cooked his pig, by burning a house down round him; and appears to make a young and beautiful woman privy to the monstrous crime. Add a country doctor, who, having been in the Navy, knows at sight that a young and beautiful woman must be innocent, and all is prepared for the arrival of the detective. (But I am coming to detectives in a moment.) Mr. Lynn Brock's beginning is pretty good, too: he engages our sympathy for a husband who suspects his wife of infidelity, and thoroughly disgusts us with the social habits of the villain, before killing anybody at all. As for Mr. Goodchild, he has a woollen monkey sent as a sign to each of those rich people who are going to be robbed. But I shall not linger over Mr. Goodchild: I am doubtful whether even my most intellectual friends would take his book seriously: its plot is a bundle of the crudest improbabilities, and its chief interest lies in the insouciance with which its two heroines change from

being Lady Helen Meredith and Lady Olive Beecholme into being Lady Meredith and Lady Beecholme—and back again.

Mr. and Mrs. Cole and Mr. Fletcher write, not merely well, but with distinction and humour. Both of them—I mean all three of them—have abandoned the convention by which Scotland Yard is inhabited entirely by imbeciles, and a private detective of odd habits has to be called in to put things right. They go straight to the Yard for their detectives, and get admirable ones. Mr. Fletcher has allowed himself scope for real characterization in his drawing of Jennison, an artlessly egoistic and immoral young man who engages in private detection for purposes of blackmail, without even for a moment asking himself whether it is right or wrong. The officer from the Yard takes his measure quickly. There is another detective, from America, who verges on the convention of unconventionality; but, apart from Jennison, there seems small attempt to give reality to anybody or anything; the story is just a light, slight and amusing horror. 'The Death of a Millionaire' is more elaborate and ingenious, and, though here again there is small attempt at characterization except in one instance, I suppose the book could scarcely be very much better of its kind. Why people of the capacity of Mr. and Mrs. Cole should give their time to the kind is a problem which only the intellectual can solve: and they, as we know, are busy with remoter problems. The one character who has character in 'The Death of a Millionaire' is an official of Scotland Yard; we are, however, warned at the end that he is leaving, and setting up in a private business of his own. This idea is partly shared with 'The Secret of the Flames,' in which the crime is unravelled by a man previously and wrongfully dismissed from the Yard. In 'The Deductions of Colonel Gore,' the deductions are made by Colonel Gore: he is an attractive gentleman, who has loved and lost and fought and explored: and he is specially attractive because he does not begin with an irritating omniscience, but makes his mistakes and learns his job as he goes along. Mr. Brock has taken pains with his minor characters, and writes well.

But beyond all question the gem of this collection is Sir Basil Thomson's 'Mr. Pepper.' A Sir Basil, I may mention, occurs in 'The Death of a Millionaire.' Superintendent Wilson, the hero of that work, allows himself to be facetious on the subject. "I remember," he says, "they used to discover at least a couple of great revolutionary plots a week, before Sir Basil went"; but then, "Wilson's little differences with Sir Basil had been notorious, and the quoting of Sir Basil as an authority caused him to react at once." It would be amusing if Sir Basil Thomson were to introduce into his next book an economist who should air his opinions of a hypothetical G.D.H. There seems unlimited scope in this idea. But nobody—not Mr. Cole himself—is readier than the author of 'Mr. Pepper' to make fun of the people who see the hand of Poale Zion in every "rag," and a Communist conspiracy in every dinner-party. Precisely these two mistakes are, in fact, made by Mr. Pepper. Sir Basil has pulled the wheel round full circle: not Scotland Yard, but the private detective who despises and derides Scotland Yard, is now the comic figure; and his adventures are recorded in a vein of pleasant and scholarly banter which is at once excellent parody and ingenious plot-making. Mr. Pepper's aphorisms illuminate his character: "If there is an obvious clue to a mystery do not attempt to follow it: it will lead you wrong." "If one person only had a motive for the crime you may feel certain that he is innocent." "Look for the unlikely, and, preferably, the sensational, explanation; and in nine cases out of ten you will be right." "Make a practice of being interviewed by reporters." His methods closely resemble those of Bret Harte's comic detective, but they are less extreme, and some of the horrors into which he intrudes his immense stupidity are genuinely and satisfactorily horrid.

REVIEWS

TCHEKHOV'S LETTERS

The Life and Letters of Anton Tchekhov. By S. S. Koteliansky and Philip Tomlinson. Cassell. 16s. net.

WE are in a fair way to learn more about Tchekhov than any other Russian writer and, so powerful is the fascination of the man, the more we know the more we want to know. Within the past ten years the best of his stories and all his plays have been translated by Mrs. Garnett, who also in 1920 issued a selection of the letters. Here now is another volume of them. Of the 300 pages only 30 are devoted to a "life" of Tchekhov, consisting of a biographical note by E. Zamyatin and two articles by Michael Tchekhov, the rest of the book gives us about 300 letters, twice as many as the Garnett volume. Of the new material there is not much that is materially new; there is perhaps a larger number of letters concerning his plays, but scarcely any in which his sociological activities—so striking a feature of the man—are recorded. There are no letters relating to his historic Saghalien journey, none to Tolstoy, with whom he must have corresponded, and none to his wife, but there is a larger instalment to his brother Alexander, who always seemed to bring out a delightful vein of raillery. Writing to introduce Alexander's stories to the editor Lakin Anton says: "He's not a bad humorist. This can be seen from the fact that he entered the Taganrog Customs House when everything had been already stolen from there."

Nothing is more striking than the way these letters give the reader a picture of the person to whom Tchekhov is writing; he always seems to be perfectly aware of the soul of his correspondent and adjusts himself, as it were, to respond to that. Perceiving this adjustment we see almost what Tchekhov knew. Admittedly this may be the mere supposition of a reader, but certainly his letters to his brothers Alexander and Nicolay conjure up vivid pictures of personalities. That epistolary classic, the letter to Nicolay from Moscow in 1886, is more than a portrait, it leaves nothing else to be thought or said about that unhappy youth:

You often complained to me that you are not understood! Even Goethe and Newton did not complain of that. Only Christ complained, but then He spoke not of Himself, but of His teaching. You are perfectly understood. But if you do not understand yourself the fault is not with other people. . . . You have only one defect. Your false position, your sorrow, and your catarrh of the bowels are all due to it. That is your extraordinary lack of education. . . . In order to educate oneself and not to stand below the level of the milieu in which you find yourself, it is not enough to read *Pickwick* and learn by heart a monologue from *Faust*. . . . Educated people, in my opinion, must satisfy the following conditions: They respect a man's personality, and therefore they are always tolerant, gentle, polite, yielding. They do not make a little riot about a little hammer or a lost rubber; living with others they do not make a favour of it, and when leaving do not say, "It is impossible to live with you!" They excuse noise, and cold, and over-roasted meat, and witticisms, and the presence of other people in their house. They are compassionate, and not only with beggars and cats, for they grieve in their soul for what the naked eye does not see. They do not sleep for nights so as to help pay for their brothers' studies, to buy clothes for their mother. . . . They respect other people's property, and therefore they pay their debts. They are pure in heart, and fear a lie as they fear fire. They do not lie, even in trifles. A lie is humiliating to the listener, and it debases the speaker in his own eyes.

But generally Tchekhov's typical love and compassion pervade the letters: "Who cannot be a servant must not be allowed to be a master"; or, "It is better to say to a man, 'my angel,' than to call him 'fool,' although man is more like a fool than an angel." In them there is less of that beautiful melancholy which covers the stories as a dying evening covers the summer day; they are full of wit and liveliness and wisdom. "Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and, I think, Japhet. Ham noticed only that his father was

a drunkard, and was completely blind to the fact that Noah was a man of genius, that he had built the ark and saved the world." To a Russian actress he writes: "Darling Lika, when you become a great singer and are paid a good salary, bestow your charity on me, make me marry you, and feed me at your expense, so that I may do nothing. But if you are indeed about to die, then this can be done by Varya Eberley whom, as you know, I love."

Throughout these 300 pages the magic of the man is inescapable, and as there are at least 1,500 more letters available in Russian, it is likely that these fine translators have an abundance of further material. But in any future publications they would be wise to translate the story titles just as they appear in Mrs. Garnett's standard edition; the philological sacrifice is a small one for them to make and it would save the reader a deal of confusion.

BEYOND JORDAN

The Vanished Cities of Arabia. By Mrs. Steuart Erskine. Hutchinson. 25s.

Trans-Jordan: Some Impressions. By Mrs. Steuart Erskine. Benn. 12s. 6d. net.

MANY travellers make the mistake of writing only one book when they come home, and the result is a salad of depth and lightness, which mingle no more than vinegar and oil and do not appeal to the same palates. Mrs. Erskine, however, has elected to serve two masters separately and deserves rich guerdon from each. The tourist in search of new sensations will welcome her impressions, learn how, when and where to go, what provisions and raiment to take, what difficulties to anticipate. The scholar will rejoice over a profound study of the vanished cities of Arabia and learn all there is to be learnt from ancient lore and modern research.

The chief of those cities is Petra the mysterious, Petra of the rose-flamed sandstone, Petra the heart of *Arabia Petraea*. Here was the stronghold of the enemies of Israel, the Edom cursed by the Prophets, the Mount of Esau notorious for wisdom and secrecy and all manner of evil. Here the Nabatæans grew from obscure traders to possess a great Empire that stretched from the Red Sea to Damascus. Their zenith of prosperity endured from 100 B.C. till A.D. 106, when Roman annexation was followed by a diversion of trade routes. In the seventh century, Islam cast a veil that was but partially lifted during the twelfth, by the coming of the Crusaders. Then Petra sank into a legend with traditions of buried treasure. It was not until 1812 that Burckhardt, a bold explorer, after disguising himself for three years as an Arab, contrived to steal a few hours there with his life in his hands. Even now few travellers have beheld its wonders, and it is something of a triumph for an English lady to have dwelt there for a few days in its ancient tomb. The journey is neither safe nor cheap, but it offers ample rewards to the adventurous, filling them with enthusiastic memories.

Other more or less vanished cities include Kerak, with its memories of Saladin; Rabboth Ammon, the stronghold of the Ammonites, once the seat of Og, the King of Basan, now a Circassian village promoted to be the capital of the modern state of Trans-Jordan: Madeba, where the Greeks founded a famous school of mosaics in the fifth century, and an extraordinary mosaic map was discovered in 1894, only to be neglected and mutilated by the monks; Gerasa, Philadelphia. Sodom, Gomorrah and Zoar are now submerged in shallow water, and hopes are entertained of interesting finds from their eventual excavation. Their story seems to have inaugurated the Dead Sea, and there was a real pillar of salt in olden days, always pointed out as being Lot's wife; it was said to be endowed with life, and to wax and wane with the moon in some mysterious way.

Mrs. Erskine provides many whimsical touches. As a rule she did not find Arabs reluctant to be photographed, but she discovered a shepherd with a strong prejudice that had nothing to do with religious scruples. "No, no," he protested, "I have not got on my trousers," but as his long white tob reached his ankles, she considered the loss need not have been taken so seriously. Arabs, however, are no less puzzled by our point of view. "The English are a curious people," a native observed, "They have made three States out of this country, and have given them three rulers. But what would you have? They have even divided God into three parts."

L.C.C. LITERATURE

John Benn and the Progressive Movement. By A. G. Gardiner. Benn. 25s. net.

The Story of the London County Council. By A. Emil Davies. Labour Publishing Co. 2s. 6d. net.

THESE volumes are rather better than the stuff commonly known as "literature" in electioneering circles at electioneering times. Propagandist output can never be literature in any respectable, still less in any true, sense, but some of it is more nakedly unashamed than other. Both these books are propaganda, but not of the worst type. The life of Sir John Benn, if written at all, could hardly be written from any other than a frankly Progressive point of view. Mr. Gardiner does not attempt to hold the scales as between the two L.C.C. parties he is concerned with. The Progressives are the heroes and the saints of the story and the Moderates the villains. This is, perhaps, a gain, for Mr. Gardiner is obviously incapable of taking a detached and impartial view of his subject, or, probably, of even trying to do so, and in giving up history for hero-worship, he reflects the attitude of the Progressive groups with whom he is concerned. There is no doubt the early Progressives of the L.C.C. were entirely convinced that they had a heaven-sent vision and that their mission was to bring this vision into effect. Everyone who stood in their way was wicked. They certainly had ideas, and their firm belief in themselves and their cause enabled them to do some big things and made them more interesting than any L.C.C. party has ever been since, by no means excluding the humdrum Progressive remnant. It was very easy to find weak points in their experiment in municipal socialism; but the public recognized that these men meant to do something and were strenuously wrestling with a Titanic task. They were, in the words of *The Times* of that day, "The Imperial Party of the Council." They have, at any rate, left monuments to themselves in Kingsway and the Boundary Street scheme in Bethnal Green, and a great main-drainage system. The reign of the Progressive saints came to an end, of course, but not until they had had a very good innings. The public grew tired of the "young men who dreamed dreams," as Lord Morley aptly, but not happily for their cause, described the Progressives. Drains and bridges and trams and the adulteration of food did not seem to demand dreamers. So the Moderates came in and have stayed in ever since. They certainly have not been dreamers, but they have helped us to realize that a dream may have its value as an ideal. Were the "Municipal Reformers" capable of dreaming they would not be capable of scrapping Rennie's Waterloo Bridge.

As for Mr. Gardiner's biography of Sir John Benn, we can only exclaim, with Mr. G. H. Mair, "Heaven help us." (He surely had this work in mind when he wrote recently in this REVIEW of "Verbosity in Biography.") Sir John Benn, to his great

credit, like not a few other men, rose from nothing, became a minor public man, sat in the L.C.C. during the whole of the Progressive reign and beyond it, led his party and became one of that long series of annuals—L.C.C. chairmen. He got into the House of Commons, where he made no impression; was rewarded with a baronetcy, and died. He was a good fellow and his unfailing high spirits gave him a personal attraction. He may, perhaps, be described as popular, though he did not always inspire confidence. Nothing but his connexion with the Progressive movement can justify his biography being published, and it should have been brief and treated as illustrative of Progressive policy. But 515 pages at 25s.!

It was a misfortune for the early Progressives that they could not disguise their sense of their own superior righteousness. Their sanctimonious air suggested hypocrisy and was offensive. In this the Labour Party—the unintended heir to Progressive good-will—have an advantage. Their rough directness does not annoy and rather suggests honesty. Mr. Davies's story of the L.C.C. is as fair as party propaganda ever is; which is to say it is not fair but might be worse. Mr. Davies is certainly right when he says, "The public has no idea of the work performed by its own institutions." He might have said "the Council," as well as public, especially in connexion with "the remarkable school," ignorance of which, with true insight, Mr. Davies selects in illustration of public indifference. The Central School of Arts and Crafts is the greatest item in the Council's educational programme, as its annual exhibition alone ought to have taught the public by now. It has taught other countries. It is good to find, at any rate, one Councillor who has some idea what this great school is doing. On the whole this little volume is not badly done.



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THE SHORT STORY

Aspects of the Modern Short Story: English and American. By Alfred C. Ward. University of London Press. Illustrated. 7s. 6d. net.

THERE is something highly unreasonable in the criticism commonly levelled at such a book as this—that it omits certain authors who have a claim, on their purely literary merit, to be included. For any book short of an encyclopædia must be open to that charge; and it is strange that selection, which is admitted to be the core of the other arts, should be banned from the art of criticism. What one has a right to complain of, however, is the absence of a principle of selection: and this appears to be the defect of Mr. Ward's work. In the absence of clear co-ordinating principles, his separate judgments seem related neither to one another nor to anything else in the world. He tells us that "A unique intensity is what Katherine Mansfield had won through to at the end"; and we should be able to discern a meaning, and even a valuable meaning, in the "intensity," if it were not spoiled by the "unique" which attends it. Mr. Ward illustrates: "Intensity of indignation (e.g., against snobbery in 'The Doll's House')." But does he seriously think that that story, lovely and noble as it is, is unique in its indignation against snobbery? Let him consider Anatole France.

We suspect Mr. Ward of being passionately interested in his subject without quite knowing what to say about it. He displays an enthusiastic rather than a critical mind. His condemnation is as strong as his laudation:

'The Cone' has several features which should ensure its receiving good reviews in high-class periodicals; nevertheless, it is a repulsive and revolting story, which no prating of "literary merit" could possibly excuse.

So, of one of Mr. Wells's stories: of those stories in bulk, thus:

In a broad view, the outstanding characteristics of these thirty pieces are that they are packed full of matter, and that they represent, in a really extraordinary degree, the free play of the human imagination. Considered in this aspect, the absence of technical distinction becomes almost a positive merit, as representing the exercise of a workmanlike sense of adequacy, to the exclusion of all possibly obtrusive technical fashioning.

It is clear that the former passage blames, the latter praises; but, beyond that, they are both as near to complete meaninglessness as words grammatically put together could be. On the other hand, Mr. Ward is catholic in his appreciations and thorough in his formal analyses: when he has something to say, he sometimes says it very sensibly.

AFRICAN ARTS

On the Trail of the Bushongo. By E. Torday. Seeley Service. 21s. net.

TO trace the migrations of peoples without written records is a work of great difficulty, for languages change or are abandoned, and the culture of new neighbours is assimilated. In the nick of time Mr. Torday has rescued from oblivion a brief vocabulary of Lumbila, the ancient tongue of the Bushongo, which they have now replaced by a Bantu speech form; he has also enriched our museums with specimens of their remarkable arts and crafts, and set the tribe on a pinnacle as the artists of Africa.

In this work are put forward two theories as to Bushongo origins, one locating their old home near Lake Chad, the other identifying them with the Azande far away to the east of Chad. The evidence is derived in part from their traditions, in part from their language and culture. They recall the names of one hundred and twenty kings, of whom the ninety-eighth was ruling in A.D. 1680, when a total eclipse of the sun took place; if, therefore, this regnal period of only ten years holds good, their migration to the south of the

Congo must have taken place about A.D. 700; but if another tradition is to be taken at its face value they took to eating maize when they reached the Kasai; maize is of American origin, and cannot have reached the Kasai much over four centuries ago. Even if we concede that tribal tradition can be preserved for more than a millennium it is hazardous work to relate Lumbila on the basis of a brief vocabulary to the Chad languages of our own day. Two languages that parted company twelve hundred years ago will have diverged considerably; among Sudanic languages even six centuries produces a marked divergence. Not only so, but language kinship cannot be inferred on a basis of vocabulary alone; at the very least it is necessary to take some account of syntax and to compare word roots rather than actual words. Mr. Torday hardly realizes the great diversity of Sudanic tongues and the rate at which linguistic islands diverge from the mother tongue. But if it should turn out that Lumbila is to be grouped with the Sara or Tumak stocks in the Chad area, his other hypothesis goes by the board, for the Azande language belongs to the Middle Zone, whereas the Chad tongues are of the Central sub-family. Or does Mr. Torday assume that the Azande have abandoned their former tongue? If so, on what grounds does he make them come from Chad? For Lagae's inquiries show that their traditions go back only some thirteen generations, and he knows nothing of an old home near Chad.

These are, however, matters of minor importance to the general reader, for he will find in this work a vivid picture of the real native untouched by alien ideas.

GOYA

Francisco de Goya. By August L. Mayer. Translated by Robert West. Dent. 63s. net.

GOYA, not only because of his own work, but also because of his influence on Cézanne, Renoir, and Manet, is of all the great masters one of the most interesting to this generation. Several English books have been written about his work, but the present translation is none the less of great value. Herr Mayer achieves here the distinction of supplying the needs both of the expert and the intelligent public in one volume. There are 434 plates, a bibliography and an index. The bibliography is out of date, there are frequent errors in the references from text to illustration, and the illustrations are imperfectly reproduced.

There are two aspects which emerge from a study of text and illustrations, so apt to much present discussion that we wish to draw particular attention to them. Those to whom modern art is offensive and incomprehensible attack it mainly on the ground that it is not like nature and that it is ugly. Pertinent to the first point is the following passage from Goya's unpublished introduction to the 'Caprichos':

I crave the public's indulgence in consideration of the fact that the author has made use of no strange models, nor even of studies from nature. The imitation of nature is as difficult as it is admirable if one can really attain to it and carry it through. But he also may deserve praise, who has completely withdrawn himself from nature, and has succeeded in placing before our eyes forms and movements which have hitherto existed only in our imagination. . . . Painting, like Poetry, selects from the universe what she can best use for her own ends. She unites, she concentrates in one fantastic figure circumstances and characters which nature has distributed among various individuals. Thanks to this wise and ingenious combination the artist merits the title of an inventor and ceases to be a mere subordinate copyist.

Not only was Goya modern in this conscious avoidance of imitation, but he is related to much modern work, as well as to the great artists of the north such as Rembrandt when he painted 'Le Boeuf,' by his disregard of beauty. His frequent emphasis was upon ugliness, and his aim was to show character and spirituality in ordinary human beings. He did not choose, any more than Mr. Sickert or Mr. Gertler choose, "to depict the beauty of ideal beings in ideal worlds."

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Contemporary British Artists. Edited by Albert Rutherston. Benn. 8s. 6d. net.

TWO more volumes have now appeared in this series, and we are glad to find that the editor's own individual and exquisite art occupies one of them. This is edited by another hand. "R. M. Y. G.," whose identity the publishers conceal, has written a sympathetic estimate of Mr. Rutherston's work with that light touch which is characteristic of his subject.

The other volume deals with Mr. Jacob Epstein, and is, we suspect, by Mr. Hubert Wellington. It is a penetrating analysis of Mr. Epstein's artistic aims and development, but is perhaps a little too much concerned merely with methods of expression. H. W. may feel that in clearing away the difficulties of Mr. Epstein's idiom he is opening eyes which will look and wonder and comprehend; that Mr. Epstein can then be left to convey his own significance.

These two books follow the usual practice of the series, and include a portrait of the artist, some thirty pages of text, and thirty-five reproductions.

Greek Athletics. By F. A. Wright. With eight illustrations. Cape. 4s. 6d. net.

MR. WRIGHT has a keen sense of the modern world as well as the ancient. To-day Greek sports are not much to us, and the important part of his book is its insistence on Greek beauty of form and poise of body to emphasize English negligence. Few know how to walk, or even to stand to the best advantage. Feet are imprisoned and crushed, so that sculptors have to copy for that detail from the antique. Women receive from Mr. Wright several rebukes for weak knees and other defects.

The Attic climate was superior to ours as allowing a general outdoor life, but we are not at all sure that the average Athenian was so ideal a person as he has been represented. Athens in its flowering time was superb in art and theorising; but these are not the whole of life. Still, by noting the Greek ideals of physical culture we can improve atrophied muscles and get nearer healthy and natural development. Since the war, lack of means and malnutrition have injured many a human body, particularly of the older sort, but school children have, we believe, improved on the whole. Drilling in itself is dull, and needs the aid of music. As for food, just now we are on the eve of remarkable discoveries and no one can dogmatize. Ignorance is the chief cause of degeneracy, and this bright little book may help to remove it. The pictures include a game that looks like hockey, taken from a statue base dug out of the old wall of Athens in 1922.

The Life and Death of Cleopatra. By Claude Ferval. Translated from the French by Herbert Wilson. Hurst and Blackett. 18s. net.

THIS work is not exactly a romance, nor can it conscientiously be described simply as a work of history. Its author, who has produced work of sufficient merit to be crowned by the French Academy, seems rather to have attempted what can be described only as a new style of writing. So far as she can attain it, she claims to have followed historical sources, reserving the right to follow her own conclusions—guided in such cases, one assumes, rather by her æsthetic and imaginative sense than by any scholarly acumen—on the occasions when authorities conflict.

The episodes of her book are supplied by Plutarch and his fellows, but the author herself fills in the corners. It is for her own arbitrament to tell her readers what dress Cleopatra wore on what occasion, the colour of the hangings in her room, and the flowers on her table; Plutarch may be left to tell us the weightier utterances of Julius Cæsar and Antony, but Mdlle. Ferval will give us their small-talk and describe their gestures as she sees them.

Military Operations: France and Belgium, 1914. Vol. 2. By Brigadier-General J. E. Edmonds. Macmillan. 12s. 6d. net.

THE second volume of the history of the Great War, based on official documents, which General Edmonds is preparing by direction of the historical section of the Committee of Imperial Defence, is a highly meritorious piece of work. It describes the fall of Antwerp and the great battles in Flanders, from October 10 to November 22, in which our Expeditionary Force bore the brunt of the German thrust against the Channel Ports. In spite of the extreme compression which General Edmonds has been forced to apply to his staff's original drafts, in which the events of each day were worked out with the aid of all available data from German as well as British sources, the narrative is luminous and intensely interesting. The more one knows, the more marvellous appears the heroism and skill of the thin khaki line which saved a most perilous situation. We are glad to see that the price of the work has been materially reduced, and that a more adequate series of sketch-maps is now included.

The Royal Navy as I Saw It. By Captain G. H. A. Willis. Murray. 16s. net.

ONE is accustomed to speak and write of naval reminiscences as racy and, trite as the word may be, there is none more applicable to Paymaster-Captain Willis's book. It is distinctly a refreshing, lively record of over forty years' service ashore and afloat, told with all an Irishman's zest. The author writes with the pleasantest recollections of the old days of masts and yards, and among the many good stories he has to tell the best undoubtedly relate to that period.

The author's naval service took him to many parts of the Seven Seas, and the reader will find much to interest him, especially in the pictures of life under Eastern skies. The only blemish in a really entertaining book is the tendency (a growing tendency in present-day literature, we are sorry to note) to give the language of the lower deck in its native forcefulness. The repetition of a certain sanguinary adjective does not intensify the humour of a joke, and is likely to give offence to the reader.

Buddhist Birth-Stories. The Nidana-Katha. Translated by T. W. Rhys Davids; edited by Mrs. Rhys Davids. Routledge. 7s. 6d. net.

THIS translation was originally published in 1880 in Trubner's Oriental Series, and is now re-issued as one of the Broadway Translations. It is a work of high interest and value. The work is a sort of introduction to the 'Jataka,' a collection of stories narrating events connected with the previous existences of the Buddha which have formed the origin of much of our European popular literature. Prof. Davids's Introduction tells the story of how this came about, and of how the Buddha himself has become a recognized saint in both the Roman and the Orthodox Churches.

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To allow increased space for Answers to Correspondents, the Rules for the Acrostic Competition will in future be on occasion omitted. They will, however, always appear at least once a month.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 158.

DAMEL AND DAME TO EVERY CHILD WELL KNOWN.

1. Who rules it, sometimes sits upon a throne.
2. Behead the criminal: curtail him too;
3. Then this he'll be, if my surmise is true.
4. Food savoury makes which else insipid seems.
5. Abolish this—you'll realize our dreams!
6. A tradesman I; my inside oil should yield.
7. What soldiers do when camping in the field.
8. Brazil's vast plains still rear this noble fowl.
9. That of your monk's completed by his cowl.
10. The full soul loathes it, nor can he be blamed.
11. A beauteous lady for her virtue famed.
12. Boat, barge, and galley are with me propelled.
13. By sober folk in detestation held.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 159.

WON TO THE LUCKLESS BARQUE ENGULFED IN OUR WILD WATERS!

1. Framed for instruction of our little sons and daughters.
2. For honey widely known in the brave days of old.
3. To party false, or faith,—a wanderer from the fold.
4. Of houses or of lands this list implies possession.
5. Transpose one who pursues a very base profession.
6. "Fill high the sparkling bowl, the rich repast prepare."
7. Leaves I do well without; my stems resemble hair.
8. Unlearned as he is, that rant I can't away with.
9. When does a miser give his children pearls to play with?

Solution to Acrostic No. 156.

C atechis M
H ybl A¹
A postat E
R ent-rol L
Y p S
B anque T
D odde R
I gn Orant
S eldo M

¹ "The beautiful country near Hybla . . . was so celebrated for its fertility and particularly for its honey, that it was called Mel Passi (sic; ? paese) till it was overwhelmed by the lava of Atna; and having then become totally barren, by a kind of pun its name was changed to Mal Passi."

BRYDENE, A Tour through Sicily, Letter IX.

ACROSTIC No. 156.—The winner is Mr. G. F. B. de Gruchy, Manoir de Noirmont, St. Aubin, Jersey, who has selected as his prize 'Ao Tea Roa,' by the Hon. W. P. Reeves, published by Allen & Unwin and reviewed by us on February 28 under the title of 'New Zealand.' Twenty-two other competitors asked for this book, 36 named 'Queer Fish,' etc., etc.

ALSO CORRECT: Balitho, Ruth Bevan, East Sheen, M. B., A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, Lillian, Twyford, E. Edwards, Vera Hope, S. M. Groves, Peter, Hon. R. G. Talbot, Carlton, Met, J. D. T., Kirkton, Zyk, M. Story, Dolmar, Margaret, Stucco, G. W. Miller, Ceyx, Plumbago, Vron, R. Eccles, Carrie, Melville, Gay, Mormor, Cory, Miss Kelly, Hely Owen, Vixen, Bolo, Martha, Doric, Mrs. Whitaker, John Lennie, Mrs. J. Butler, Quis, B. Alder, E. G. Horner, Mrs. Woodward, Beechworth, Jop, Tiner, Jay, and Boskerris.

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The *Fortnightly* opens with 'Art without the Artist,' the new preface by Mr. George Moore to his trilogy. To our mind they are the best things Mr. Moore has written; he modestly attributes their merits to Nature. After that it would be churlish to expect historical accuracy in his anecdotes. Mr. Crozier Long explains the effect of inflation on the capital of German industrial companies. Mr. Spender writes on 'Our Relations with Russia,' and urges an attempt at renewal. Mr. Hallinger gives a good account of the career and importance of Trotsky. A new argument is brought forward by Mr. Archibald Hurd in 'Would Socialism starve us?' and the President of the Lancashire Cricket Club contributes his views on 'The Ethics of Cricket Criticism.' The number closes with 'The Enemy in Ambush,' a short story of an Englishman in a Petrograd family told with his accustomed understanding of Russia by Mr. Hugh Walpole.

The *National Review*, in its 'Episodes of the Month,' deals despondingly with the anticipated return to the gold standard, with the pre-occupation of our Government with the welfare of every other country but England and France, and with the evils that golf has wrought upon our sporting pre-eminence, and the first two papers enforce these views. There is a sound article on Spelling Reform by Mr. T. Rice Holmes, 'Faddists on the Warpath.' There is very little to be said in favour of much of our spelling until we see the gentlemen who attack it. Mr. T. A. Coward tells of some unfrequented spots in the South in 'The Flamingo in France,' and there are several other equally interesting articles.

The *Calendar of Modern Letters* opens well. It is evidently to be more or less devoted to the consideration of contemporary work, though it admits back numbers like Dostoevsky and Poe. The contributors to this number include Mr. D. H. Lawrence, Mr. Robert Graves (fanciful poems), Mr. Edgell Rickword (an amusing revaluation of Sir James Barrie), and Mr. Douglas Gorman (Poe's Analysis of Inspiration). The reviews of current literature are to be a special feature of the magazine.

Blackwood opens with 'Bozzy and Yorick,' in which Mr. F. A. Pottle endeavours to show that Boswell met Sterne in London in 1760, and speculates on their acquaintanceship. Mr. E. Vale has a good travel article; Miss O'Neill retells the story of 'William Cobbett, the Radical,' and General MacMann describes 'The Indianization of the Indian Army,' which is not so very new after all. 'Musings without Method' are disturbed by the strike at Buckingham Palace, the Peerage of Mr. Asquith, the carelessness of Deans and Chapters, and Mr. Lloyd George—a woeful catalogue.

The *Adelphi* opens with a half confession of William Archer just before he died as to some sort of survival of personality after death, while another paper discusses 'Why Christianity Fails (1).' The number is not greatly brightened by some imaginary letters translated from Bunin, a landscape in Italy by Aldous Huxley, and a story by Mr. Gerhardt which might have been labelled 'Futility.' The Journeyman calls attention to Renan's 'L'Avenir de la Science.'

Cornhill opens with some fragments of the autobiography of Tom Hughes—we cannot call him Thomas. Mr. Vernon Rendall in 'The English Character and the English Language' reflects on the way national characteristics mould its daily speech. Mr. Guedalla writes on George III, and there are good short stories by Miss G. E. Mitton and Mr. Radcliffe. Miss Loveday's 'An Historical Problem: Napoleon's Heir' seems half-way between fact and fiction. A very good number.

The *Empire Review* has fallen a victim to the current obsession and offers a Cross Word Puzzle to its readers. Lord Birkenhead deals this month with Lord Chancellor Somers, of whom he has some wise and new things to say. The Headmaster of Eton compares Aristophanes and W. S. Gilbert, not altogether to the disparagement of the latter, especially in the point of workmanship. The chronicles of Prof. Thomson and Dr. Williams are always an interesting feature of this review. Mr. Desmond MacCarthy is rather too pontifical about things in general as well as George Wyndham.

The *English Review* deals in foreign matters with Russia (Prof. Sarolea), Spain (Mr. L. A. Bolin), and France. The chances of a monarchist restoration from outside are infinitesimal: when the Whites return to Russia they will find the scar their absence made cicatrized. Lord Londonderry writes on 'Ulster's Contribution to the Empire,' and Lord Raglan on 'The Vanished Cities of Arabia,' while other matters of contemporary interest receive full attention.

Chambers's Journal has articles on 'Danzig' by Mr. Robert Machray, 'The Lost Atlantis' by Mr. Lewis Spence, and the meaning of the name 'Rotten Row' by Mr. D. MacRitchie. Mr. John Buchan has reached the most interesting stage of his 'Comedy for Poachers.'

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CITY NOTES

Lombard Street, Thursday

AS I anticipated last week, the marking down of prices prior to the alteration in the Bank Rate was overdone, with the result that after the official notification was made prices improved. The necessity for the increase from 4% to 5% was, to my mind, obvious, but this point of view is apparently not unanimously held. Questions have been asked in the House, and the daily Press has contributed its share of criticism. I respect the opinions of others, but I must admit to a feeling of surprise at some of the statements that have been made on this subject. I read, for example, in a daily paper that a housing expert says: "The increase in the Bank Rate from 4% to 5% is really the same thing as a 25% increase in the cost of labour." I should like to know how he arrives at this conclusion. I maintain that the benefits which will accrue to this country by a speedy return of sterling to par greatly outweigh the disadvantages of an increased money rate.

RECONSTRUCTION LOANS

Those who favour a dollar investment would be well advised to consider the purchase of the American issue of the Hungarian 7½% Reconstruction Loan. This can be acquired in New York at 90%, plus accrued interest, which compares favourably with the London price of 93. As the London price is ex a half-year's dividend paid on February 1, it will be seen that this Loan has become popular since I originally recommended it last September, when the price was 87½. On August 30 last a purchase of the Vienna Portion of the Austrian Guaranteed Loan at 86% was recommended. It is now nearly ten points higher—in fact, it now stands at nearly the same price as the American issue of the same Loan, with which it is identical. When dealing with the Reconstruction Loans, it is interesting to note that the French Portion of the Dawes German Loan is one point below the price of the English portion, while the Belgian Portion is nearly two points lower. This demand for the French Portion can probably be attributed to the flight from the franc. All these tranches are identical, and all are sterling loans.

"CAVEAT EMPTOR"

The feature of the Mining markets this week has been the activity in shares of companies said to be interested in the platinum discoveries in South Africa. I view the movement with considerable apprehension. The rich discoveries made may lead to one or two companies reaping large profits, but if the boom now raging in Johannesburg really spreads to the London market it will prove in the long run an expensive luxury for investor and speculator. Efforts are being made to boost the shares of a large number of companies on the strength of indefinite whispers that they are interested in platinum. Every company-monger is shaking platinum propositions out of his portfolio, and if the movement lasts we shall be greeted with a flood of so-called "platinum" issues. The shares of the companies primarily concerned have had substantial rises; the future may prove these to be justified, for prices may go higher. Market manipulators will not miss so good an opportunity, and the public appears ripe for a gamble. If everything goes according to plan much money may be made. I am afraid, however, I shall not be able to claim credit for putting my readers in, for my advice is summarized in the two words at the head of this paragraph: *Caveat emptor*.

TAURUS

Company Meeting**TRADE INDEMNITY COMPANY****GOOD PROGRESS.**

THE SEVENTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of this company was held on March 12, at the Institute of Chartered Accountants, Moorgate Place, E.C.

Mr. C. E. Heath, O.B.E. (the Chairman), traced the history of the credit insurance business and its development under Mr. Spain, the Underwriter. He explained the part which had been taken in it by the Excess Insurance Co. and the British Trade Corporation, leading up to the formation of the Trade Indemnity Co. and its subsequent development by an increase of capital. It had always been his opinion that the scope for credit insurance was so large that it was essential to bring in the British Insurance Companies and, if possible, the Banks. The names of the directors showed that, so far as the insurance companies were concerned, this point was appreciated, and representatives of all the different classes of banks were numbered amongst the shareholders.

ASSOCIATED COMPANIES ABROAD.

The principles of the business were very simple: first, they would not permit anybody simply to trade on the security which the company offered. It was fundamental that, if the company lost, the assured should lose, too. All they did was to enable an assured to undertake a larger venture than, but for the company's insurance, he would feel justified in undertaking. Secondly, they did not insure a risk which was already running. For all practical purposes the assured must be voluntarily risking his money at the same time that the company risked theirs. Thirdly, they were not bankers or financiers. They did not guarantee to provide the money if there were delay in payment; neither, if there were actual default, did they pay on the nail, any more than a marine insurer paid when a ship went ashore or a fire company when a house caught fire. Like them, they only paid the ultimate loss. He always thought that no insurance was justified which did not in itself improve the risk. That was eminently the case with this company. The mere fact that they were willing, as a result of their enquiries, to insure a risk was in itself a justification for the merchant to go on with the transaction and to take his share of it. It was an actual fact that, on more than one occasion, clients had been saved from dangerous transactions as a result of the company's warnings. It was hoped within the near future—and the process had already begun—to have a network of corresponding companies abroad who, so far as their foreign risks were concerned, would share in the responsibilities assumed by the company.

LARGE EXTENSIONS FORESHADOWED.

Turning to the accounts, the Chairman said that when the new shareholders came in the liabilities on underwriting account were estimated at nearly £30,000. It had turned out, however, that nearly £8,000 of this would not be required, and with the help of this sum the directors were able to pay a 5 per cent. dividend, to pay off the whole of the preliminary expenses of £2,698, and to carry forward £3,289. They did not, therefore, touch the 1924 account. All known losses to date amounted, apart from what was reinsured, to about £8,000, and there were expenses of £8,000, making in all £16,000, against a net premium of just over £51,000. They estimated that two-thirds of the risk represented by that premium had already run off, so that they were in a very good position. To the balance which might be left out of the £35,000 which they now had in hand must be added the interest they would receive on invested capital and premiums—about £12,000. They would thus have £47,000 with which to meet the liability on about £15,000 unearned premium. He wished, however, to warn shareholders that this had been an extraordinary year so far. By the law of average they would have to pay for it later, and the directors wished to emphasize that this sort of thing could not be expected to endure. A reasonable profit he hoped they would always make; at all events, they had done so in the past, but nothing like the percentage of their premiums which 1924 looked as if it would provide. It had always been his personal ambition to arrive at a premium of £50,000 net to themselves for 1924, and it was satisfactory that they had slightly exceeded this. They were hoping for increased business for 1925, and so far January and February had fully justified their hopes. Their ramifications were extending, and prospects had justified them in opening a branch office at Manchester under the management of Mr. Alan Dean, in whom they had the greatest confidence. In conclusion, the Chairman paid a warm tribute to the services which had been rendered by Mr. Spain and his officials.

The report was unanimously adopted.

Company Meeting**BRAKPAN MINES, LIMITED**

(Incorporated in the Transvaal.)

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the TWENTY-SECOND ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS in the above Company will be held in the Board Room, Second Floor, "The Corner House," Johannesburg, on FRIDAY, the 15th day of May, 1925, at 2.30 o'clock in the afternoon, for the following business:—

1. To receive the Reports of the Directors and Auditors, and to consider the Balance Sheet and Revenue and Expenditure Account for the year ended the 31st December, 1924.
2. To elect two Directors in the place of Mr. W. J. O'Brien, O.B.E., M.L.A., and Mr. J. L. Jourdan, who retire by rotation in terms of the Articles of Association, but are eligible and offer themselves for re-election.
3. To fix the remuneration for the past audit, and to appoint Auditors for the ensuing year.
4. To transact such other business as may be transacted at an Ordinary General Meeting.

The London Transfer Registers of the Company will be closed from the 21st April to the 24th April, 1925, and the Head Office Transfer Registers from the 11th May to the 30th May, 1925, all days inclusive.

Holders of Share Warrants to Bearer desirous of attending in person or by proxy, or of voting at any General Meeting of the Company, shall produce their Share Warrants for verification, or may, at their option, deposit same as follows:—

- (a) At the Head Office of the Company in Johannesburg at least twenty-four hours before the time appointed for the holding of the Meeting.
- (b) At the London Office of the Company, 5, London Wall Buildings, E.C.2, at least 30 days before the date appointed for the holding of the Meeting.
- (c) At the Office of the Credit Mobilier Français, 30 and 32, Rue Taitbout, Paris, at least 30 days before the date appointed for the holding of the Meeting.

Upon such production or deposit, Certificates, with Proxy Forms, will be issued, under which such Share Warrant Holders may attend the Meeting either in person or by proxy.

By Order, J. H. JEFFERYS,
London Secretary.

London Transfer Office:
5, London Wall Buildings, Finsbury Circus, E.C.2.
12th March, 1925.

Company Meeting**SPRINGS MINES, LIMITED**

(Incorporated in the Transvaal.)

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the SIXTEENTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS in the above Company will be held in the Board Room, Second Floor, "The Corner House," Johannesburg, on FRIDAY, the 15th day of May, 1925, at 12 o'clock noon, for the following business:—

1. To receive the Reports of the Directors and Auditors, and to consider the Balance Sheet and Revenue and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December, 1924.
2. To elect two Directors in the place of Mr. A. F. Lyall and Mr. L. A. Pollak, M.C., who retire by rotation in terms of the Articles of Association, but are eligible and offer themselves for re-election.
3. To fix the remuneration for the past audit, and to appoint Auditors for the ensuing year.
4. To transact such other business as may be transacted at an Ordinary General Meeting.

The London Transfer Registers of the Company will be closed from the 21st April to the 24th April, 1925, and the Head Office Transfer Registers from the 11th May to the 30th May, 1925, all days inclusive.

Holders of Share Warrants to Bearer desirous of attending in person or by proxy, or of voting at any General Meeting of the Company, shall produce their Share Warrants for verification, or may, at their option, deposit same as follows:—

- (a) At the Head Office of the Company in Johannesburg at least twenty-four hours before the time appointed for the holding of the Meeting; or
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Upon such production or deposit, Certificates, with Proxy Forms, will be issued, under which such Share Warrant Holders may attend the Meeting either in person or by proxy.

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TOTAL PREMIUM INCOME amounted to £2,625,800.

CLAIMS PAID during the year amounted to £1,060,951.

The Total amount paid in Claims by the Company up to the 31st December, 1924, was £18,904,200.

ORDINARY BRANCH. The Premium Income amounted to £652,051.

The number of Policies issued in this Branch was 10,644, assuring (after deduction of Re-assurances) the sum of £1,714,839.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH. The Premium Income amounted to £1,971,505.

TOTAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE. The Gross Income from all sources amounted to £3,112,750, showing an Increase of £124,752 over the Gross Income of the previous year. The Total Outgo amounted to £2,050,061, leaving a balance of Income over Expenditure on the year's accounts of £1,062,689.

TOTAL FUNDS. The Total Funds now amount to £9,561,938.

VALUATION. The Annual Valuation of the Company's Policy liabilities has been made by the Actuary, Mr. J. Murray Laing, F.I.A., F.F.A.

Ordinary Branch. A Surplus of £200,043 is disclosed, which includes £58,280 brought forward from the previous year.

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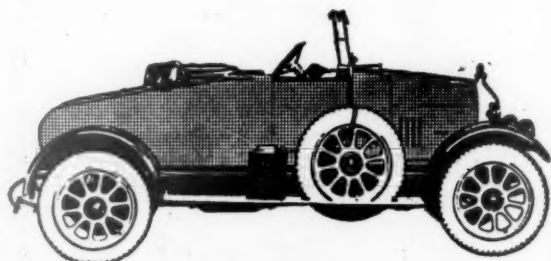
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* * *

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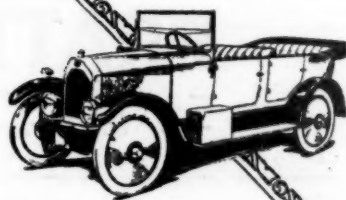
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1. To receive the Reports of the Directors and Auditors, and to consider the Balance Sheet and Revenue and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December, 1924.
2. To elect two Directors in the place of Messrs. F. R. Lynch and L. A. Pollak, M.C., who retire by rotation in terms of the Articles of Association, but are eligible and offer themselves for re-election.
3. To fix the remuneration for the past audit, and to appoint Auditors for the ensuing year.
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Company Meeting

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MERGE PROPOSALS APPROVED.

AN EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of this Company was held on the 9th inst., in London, to approve a provisional agreement providing for a merger of interests between the Company and the Indian Iron and Steel Company, Limited, of Calcutta.

Mr. C. A. Bendix, who presided, gave the details of the arrangement, which have already been published, and stated that, owing to their very modern plant, the Indian Company could produce pig-iron much more cheaply than the Bengal Company could, but against this the latter Company had a very profitable business in their foundries, where their iron was converted into finished articles, such as cast-iron pipes, railway sleepers, etc., whereas the Indian Company had no foundries. At the moment there was a dearth of orders for the sleeper department, but when he was in India recently there were signs of improving business in this respect, while their general and pipes foundries were fully occupied. The demand for pipes in India was very heavy, and they had just given instructions for the erection of an additional pipe foundry. The plant of the Indian Company was up to date in every way, and the chairman, Mr. William Turner MacLellan, who was still in India, valued the works and plant at over £1,500,000. From a careful examination which the Bengal Company's experts had made, there seemed to be no doubt that the Indian Company was one of the cheapest producers of iron in the world at the present time, and they were exporting their products in ever-increasing quantities. Their ore deposits were very similar to those of the Bengal Company, and were of about equal size. These deposits had only just been connected to the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, and this was undoubtedly the reason that the Indian Company had only been making small profits hitherto. They had had to purchase ore at high prices from competitors, but from now on he thought we could look for a good return on the Company's capital. The Company's output should be something between 220,000 and 270,000 tons per annum. The saving which must result from the two Companies working together in close co-operation should be considerable, and, given normal conditions in the world iron trade, the profits arising might be very big indeed.

He then moved: "That the provisional agreement dated the 23rd day of February, 1925, and made between the Bengal Iron Company, Limited, of the first part, the Indian Iron and Steel Company, Limited (of Calcutta), of the second part, and Messrs. Haas and Sons of the third part, which has been produced to this meeting, be and the same is hereby sanctioned and confirmed, and that the directors be and they are hereby authorized to carry the said agreement into effect with such modifications (if any) as may in their opinion be necessary or expedient in the circumstances of the case." (Cheers.)

Mr. J. Angus, M.Inst.C.E., seconded the motion, and it was carried with one dissentient after the Chairman had replied to some questions.

A vote of thanks to the chairman concluded the proceedings.

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